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A WORD to SINNERS.

AND

A WORD to SAINTS.

The *Former* tending to the Awakening the Consciences of secure Sinners, unto a lively Sense and apprehension of the dreadful condition they are in, so long as they live in their Natural and unregenerate Estate.

The *Latter* tending to the Directing and perswading of the Godly and Regenerate unto several singular Duties.

By *Tho. Gouge*, Minister of the Gospel.

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IMPRIMATUR.

April. 14. 1671.

Guliel. Wigan, *Rever.* *Humph.* Epiſc. Lond. à *Sac.* Dom.

To my dearly beloved Friends the Inhabitants of St. Sepulchres *Pariſh*, London.

Beloved Friends,

TO further the ſalvation of mens ſouls, as it is a moſt Excellent Work, ſo it ought to be the ſtudy, and endeavour both of every Chriſtian in his place and calling, and eſpecially of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, whoſe Office and Function calls upon them more importunately to labour therein. Now ſince *Regeneration is abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation*, and that there can be no entrance into the *new Jeruſalem* without a *new birth*. I have according to that ability which the Lord hath given me, ſet forth in this ſmall Treatiſe the *nature* and *neceſſity* of *Regeneration*, together with the *Means* on your part to be performed for the better attaining thereunto.

Moſt of theſe truths have been Preached in your hearing, and now they are preſented to your ſight; that thereby you may be put in remembrance of them, and more thorowly affected with them. Though I ceaſe to be your Miniſter, yet I ſhall not ceaſe to do what in me lyeth to further your eternal happineſs. It was my hearty deſire of your everlaſting welfare that firſt put me upon Preaching on this Subject: and the like deſire hath ingaged me to preſent the ſame to your view.

Herein have I ſet before you *Heaven* and *Hell*, *Happineſs* and *Miſery*. Oh that you would be ſo wiſe as to chuſe Heaven rather than Hell, Happineſs rather than Miſery.

That I ſhould adventure theſe Notes into the World, is not out of any conceit that there is any thing extraordinary in them; but meerly out of

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that

that ſtrong affection I bear to your ſouls welfare, *For my hearts deſire for you is, that you may be ſaved*: and will the Lord but bleſs this ſmall Treatiſe to the Regeneration, or Edification of any of your Souls, I have the end of all my pains and coſt.

Avoiding all affectation of Words, I have uſed plainneſs of ſpeech: it being alwaies my chief deſign in the whole courſe of my Miniſtry, to affect the Hearts and Conſciences of my Hearers, rather than to tickle their Ears, and pleaſe their Phanſie.

That I may not detain you longer, I ſhall cloſe this Epiſtle with three requeſts unto you.

1. That you kindly accept of this ſmall Book which treats on a ſubject ſo neceſſary to your everlaſting happineſs.

2. That you would be pleaſed, as to peruſe it your ſelves, ſo to take ſome time to read it to your Families. If you cannot find leiſure on the week daies, then to read ſome part thereof on each Lords day, till you have read it through.

3. That you would not lock it up in your cloſets, but ſuffer it to lye in your houſes, where your Children and Servants may peruſe it as they find opportunity. Who knoweth how ſucceſsful and fruitful this plain Treatiſe may prove, if the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to accompany it with his bleſſing?

That the Lord therefore would ſo bleſs theſe my poor and weak endeavours, that ſuch as are yet in their natural ſtate may be converted, that Converts may be improved and built up in that grace wherein they ſtand, is the unfeigned deſire and hearty Prayer of

Your Servant in the Work of the Goſpel, who hath been, and ſtill is deſirous of your Spiritual welfare.

Mar. 19. 1668.

Tho. Gouge.

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John 3. 1, 2, 3.

1. *There was a man of the Phariſees, named* Nicodemus, *a ruler of the Jews.*
2. *The ſame came to Jeſus by night, and ſaid unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a Teacher come from God: for no man can do theſe Miracles that thou doeſt, except God be with him.*
3. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Verily, Verily I ſay unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdome of God.*

CHAP. I.

The Expoſition and Obſervations ariſing out of the firſt and ſecond verſes.

FRom the beginning of this third Chapter to the 22. *verſe* is ſet forth the conference between our bleſſed *Saviour*, and *Nicodemus*. In which are three things obſervable.

1. A deſcription of *Nicodemus*, verſe 1.
2. The occaſion of the conference, which was *Nicodemus his coming unto Chriſt*, expreſſed *verſe* 2.
3. The conference it ſelf, from *verſe* 3. to 22.

I. *Nicodemus* is thus deſcribed, verſe 1. *There was a man of the Phariſees, named* Nicodemus, *a ruler of the Jews:* He is here ſet forth,

1. By his name, *Nicodemus*, which is diſtinctly ſet down, as for the truth of the Hiſtory, ſo for the honour of the man. It is obſervable that in the holy Scriptures there is moſt care of ſetting down the names of good men, that have in their life time, ſome way or other, ſet forth Gods glory, and made themſelves examples worthy of imitation. For *God will honour ſuch as honour him*, he will have their memorial bleſſed. As therefore

we desire to have our memorial blessed, let us now labour to honour God in our several places, callings, conditions and relations, by a conscionable discharge of the duties belonging to them: and then we may rest assured, God will some way or other honour us.

2. *By his Sect*, He is expresly said to be *a man of the Pharisees*: who were a select Sect among the *Jews*, of highest account for their seeming sanctity and strict profession. Whereas in truth they were very *hypocrites*, for *they did all to be seen of men*, Math. 6. 1. Which because Christ discovered, and made known to the people, they proved his greatest enemies and persecutors.

3. *By his Office*. It's in general said, that he was *a Ruler of the Jews*. Which is not to be taken, as if he were the only, or chief governour of the Jews, but to shew that he was none of the common sort, but one of those who had authority and goverment amongst the *Jews*.

It is observable, that few of the *Pharisees* and *Rulers* received Christs Doctrine, and believed on him, as appears by their own expression, *Joh.* 7. 48. *Have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on him?* which interrogation importeth a strong negation; implying that none or few of the *Rulers* or *Pharisees* believed on Christ. They were so puffed up with the pride of their high-places; so swoln with conceitedness of their strict profession and seeming sanctity; and so possest with prejudice against the spiritual and heavenly doctrine of Christ, that their hearts boyled with much envy and indignation against him: and thereupon sought many wayes to entrap, and ensnare him. Yea out of very malice they thirsted after his blood, and never ceased till they took away his life. Yet here we find one, who was both a *Pharisee* and a *Ruler*, become a *Disciple of Jesus Christ*, whom Christ instructeth as in *the doctrine of regeneration*, so in other main principles of Religion, and thereupon became a true believer; whence we may observe:

Observ. *That the dew of Gods grace often falleth on the most graceless. That the greatest of sinners are oftentimes received to mercy, and embraced in the arms of free-grace.*

This God doth, as for the magnifying the riches of his grace, so for the encouraging great and notorious sin-

ners

ners to return from their sins, and to look up unto him for mercy. For are the greatest sinners ofttimes received to mercy? then there is hope of mercy for thee, how many and heinous soever thy sins are. St. *Paul* speaking of Gods mercy to him, who was not only an heinous sinner, but the *cheif of sinners*, declareth how God shewed mercy to him, that he might be a ground of hope, and encouragement unto other great and heinous sinners, *For this cause*, saith he, 1 Tim. 1. 16. *I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.* Intimating, that one special end Christ aimed at, in shewing mercy to such a sinner as himself, was to stir up and encourage other great and heinous sinners to go unto Christ, and that with hope of acceptance, casting themselves and the burden of their sins upon him. Yea questionless the conversion of so many notorious sinners is recorded in Scripture, not only as a memorial of what God hath done for others, but also as a sign and token what he is now ready and willing to do for the greatest sinners, upon their turning from their sins unto him by unfeigned repentance, and closing with Jesus Christ by a true and lively faith. Oh therefore let those admirable and stupendious patterns of mercy held forth in Scripture, be encouragements unto thee, to abandon thy sins, to turn over a new leaf, and to close with Jesus Christ, upon the terms of the Gospel.

II. *The Occasion of the conference betwixt Christ and* Nicodemus *followeth* in *verse* 2. and that was *his coming unto Christ*; which is amplified further by *the time when he came*, and that was *by night: The same came to Jesus by night. Nicodemus* his going unto Christ for farther instruction in the way and means of salvation, did evidence *the truth of* his faith, but his going *by night*, did evidence the *weakness* of his faith. He believed upon the hearing Christ Preach, and seeing the miracles which he wrought, that he was *a Teacher sent from God.* Yet because he was a *Pharisee* and a *Ruler*, thought it a disgrace to go *openly* unto Christ, to be instructed by him: but went *by night*, and thereby discovered *the weakness of his faith*; whence we may observe:

Obser. *True faith may be exceeding weak.* This title O

ye of little faith, wherewith Chriſt often upbraideth his Diſciples, is an evident proof thereof. So likewiſe that expreſſion of the poor man, who cryed out unto Chriſt, *Lord I believe, help thou my unbeliefe.* The former word, *I believe*, ſheweth *the truth* of his faith; but the latter word, *unbelief*; ſheweth the *weakneſs* of his faith, which was ſo weak, that he calls it *unbelief.*

Art thou conſcious to thy ſelf of the weakneſs of thy Faith?

1. *Be thankful unto God for that meaſure and degree which thou haſt, though it be but as a grain of muſtard-ſeed for quantity*; for the leaſt dram of true faith is of greater value than Mountains of Gold and Silver.

2. *Content not thy ſelf with a ſmall meaſure of faith*, for contentedneſs with a weak faith is an argument of no faith: and beſides the greater and ſtronger thy faith is, the greater and ſtronger will be thy comfort and conſolation. For the ſtronger thy faith is, the clearer will thy apprehenſion be of thine intereſt in Chriſt, and of the pardon of thy ſins, in and through the merits of his death and paſſion; The more vertue and ſtrength wilt thou draw from Chriſt for the mortifying thy luſts, and for the quickning thy Graces; yea with the greater cheerfulneſs wilt thou go on in thy Chriſtian courſe.

3. *Labour and ſtrive after a greater meaſure and degree of faith*, to grow from faith to faith, from one degree of faith unto another, till thou attain unto the higheſt degree thereof, even to a full aſſurance. To this end be earneſt with God in prayer for the encreaſe of thy faith. For every grace depends upon him, not onely for birth, but alſo for growth and increaſe: but of this grace of faith, he is in a ſpecial manner ſtiled, as the *author*, ſo the *finiſher* thereof, *Heb.* 12. 2.

Though thy faith at preſent be weak, yet know for thy comfort, That the weakeſt faith, if true and ſincere, is ſufficient to ſalvation. For though God giveth not to all believers a like meaſure and degree of faith, but to ſome more, to others leſs; yet he giveth to none of his leſs than may ſuffice to their ſalvation, So that the leaſt faith hath this in it, *that it is ſufficient to ſalvation*, in that it doth intereſt us in Chriſt, and in all the promiſes of the Goſpel.

III. The

III. The conference it self follows, which is a Dialogue between *Nicodemus*, and our *Blessed Saviour*: wherein *Nicodemus* begins, saying *Rabbi, we know that thou art a Teacher sent from God: for no man can do these Miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* Wherein we may Observe,

I. *The Title he giveth to our Saviour, Rabbi*, which signifieth *Master*, and so our Evangelist expoundeth it, *Joh.* 1. 38. This title rightly taken in its proper sense, is due only to *Christ*, who is *the great Prophet and Teacher that came from God*, as *Nicodemus* here acknowledgeth. Whence we may observe:

Observ. *That Jesus Christ is the great Prophet, and Teacher of his Church:* being alone able to declare his Fathers will, and to open the mysteries of the Gospel. And indeed all other Prophets were but *types* of this great *Prophet. He lay in the bosome of his Father*, and so understood the mind and will of God; and was thereby enabled to make known the oracles of God, and the mysteries of Salvation.

To him let us give ear and hearken, preaching unto us both in his Gospel, and by his Ministers, who make known unto us the mysteries of the Gospel.

II. The next thing that followeth in the conference, is *the profession which* Nicodemus *maketh of Christ, we know*, saith he, *that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these Miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* In which we may observe,

1. The profession it self, *we know that thou art a Teacher come from God.*

2. The reason thereof in the next words, *For no man can do these Miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* As if he had said, whosoever worketh Miracles, cometh from God, but thou workest Miracles, therefore thou comest from God. This clause, *these Miracles thou doest*, carryeth a great *Emphasis*, and sheweth that they were very great Miracles which Christ did, and so confirm the argument the more. This reason is sound, and affordeth this point of doctrine.

Observ. *Miracles cannot be wrought but by divine power.* For Miracles alter the order and course of nature; which none can do, but he which hath appointed, and set

that order, namely God. I will not insist on this, that I may hasten to that which I mainly intend in this Treatise.

CHAP. II.

The Exposition and Observations arising out of verse 3.

IN verse 3. follows Christs answer to *Nicodemus*, which is continued to verse 22. In which Christ first declareth *the necessity of Regeneration*, in these words, *Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdome of God.*

Before we come to the substance of Christs discourse, observe we *his manner of entertaining Nicodemus.*

You have heard from the foregoing verses, that *Nicodemus* was both a *Pharisee* and a *Ruler*; both which sorts of men most of all opposed Christ. And you have heard of *his weakness*, how through fear and shame *he went to Christ by night*; being loth to be seen with him. Yet Christ rejects him not, but kindly entertains him, and instructs him in such points, whereof he was ignorant, though they were fundamental points necessary to salvation, whence we may observe:

Observ. *Christ is ready to entertain those that in truth, and uprightness seek unto him, though their weaknesses and infirmities are many.* He rejecteth not such as are weak in faith for their weakness. We read in the History of the Gospel, that when Christ lived upon the earth, he rejected none who came unto him in uprightness of heart. Some indeed went away of themselves, but he turned away none. Only he seemed once not to regard *the Woman of Canaan*, But why? Surely not out of any purpose or intent to reject her, or turn her away, but only to make known the greatness and strength of her faith. For in the close Christ saith unto her, *O Woman great is thy Faith*, Mat. 15. 28. And can any imagine, that now Christ is in Heaven, he hath nor the same bowels of compassion towards those that come unto him, which he had, when he was upon the earth! Questionless

ſtionleſs though he be there free from *paſſion*, yet not from *compaſſion* towards weak believers. That which was long before Propheſied of him by *Iſaiah*. Chap. 42. 3. ever was, and will be found true in him, namely, *A bruiſed reed ſhall he not break, and ſmoaking flax ſhall he not quench*: that is, He ſhall not deal roughly and rigorouſly with weak Chriſtians, ſuch as are weak in grace, but mildly and gently.

For the end of Chriſts coming was *to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt*, Luk. 19. 10. And can we imagine that Chriſt, who ſeeketh after thoſe who go away from him, will reject any who do in truth ſeek after him?

What encouragement ſhould this be unto all poor believers, how weak ſoever their faith is, to go unto Chriſt, as for the ſtrengthning their weak faith, ſo for the ſubduing their ſtrong luſts, and for the reviving their drooping ſouls? For your further encouragement, you have Chriſts gracious invitation, Mat. 11. 28. *come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*. Hath he bid thee come, and will he reject thee when thou comeſt? Hath he called, come ye holy ones, come ye righteous ones, come ye ſtrong ones, and you only ſhall have reſt? Hath he not invited the weak, and the weary alſo, the drooping and fainting ſoul? Go poor weak ſoul, go unto Chriſt, behold he calleth thee, go unto him, and thou mayeſt expect thy cure. Queſtionleſs, one ſpecial reaſon why Chriſt ſhewed himſelf ſo willing and ready to hearken unto the cry of thoſe who came unto him for the cure of their bodily diſtempers, when he was upon the earth, and to heal the ſame, was to ſtir us up to go unto him for the healing of all our ſpiritual maladies and diſeaſes. For Chriſt came not into the world to heal *bodies*, but *ſouls*. And therefore when the name *Jeſus* was given him, the reaſon is ſaid to be this, *Becauſe he ſhall ſave his people from their ſins*. Mat. 1. 21. Not their *bodies* from *ſickneſſes*, but their *ſouls* from *ſins*.

Art thou bound under any ſpiritual infimities? Do as thoſe ſick and diſeaſed perſons did, when Chriſt was upon the earth, who are ſaid to go unto him in faith, believing he was both able and willing to cure them?

whereby they drew vertue from him for their healing.

Art thou troubled for the weakneſs of thy faith, complaining thou haſt no aſſurance of thine intereſt in Chriſt, no aſſurance of the pardon of thy ſins? Go unto Chriſt by prayer for encreaſe of faith, believing that he is as able, ſo willing to ſtrengthen thy weak faith. And fear not, thou ſhalt find ſuch meaſure of ſtrength added to thee, as Chriſt ſeeth beſt, and as ſhall be ſufficient for thee.

Art thou ſenſible of the working and ſtirring of corruption in thee; fearing leſt it ſhould get dominion over thee? Lay hold on that promiſe, *Rom.* 6. 14. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you.* And in confidence of his faithfulneſs that ſpake it, apply thy ſelf to Chriſt by prayer, for his making good that good word to thee: and then ſtand ſtill and ſee the ſalvation of God. Luſt as ſtrong as 'tis, will not be able to ſtand before the prayer of faith: only be careful that when thou haſt made thy Prayer, thou ſet a watch. Art thou aſſaulted with the temptations of Satan, and feareſt that he may get the victory over thee? Go unto Chriſt by prayer for ſtrength and ſupport againſt them, believing there is as a power in Chriſt, ſo a willingneſs in him to ſuccour, and ſtrengthen thee; and thou ſhalt be ſure to find, if not deliverance from temptations, yet grace ſufficient to reſiſt them, and power to overcome them.

Laſtly, Art thou troubled with an hard and obdurate heart? with a filthy and unclean heart? with a worldly, and covetous heart? with a proud and barren heart? Go unto Chriſt by prayer, believing there is as a power, ſo a willingneſs in him to mollifie thine hard and obdurate heart; to purifie thy filthy and unclean heart; to ſpiritualize thy worldly and covetous heart; to humble thy proud heart; to make fruitfull thy barren heart. And doubt not but thou ſhalt find thine hard and obdurate heart in ſome meaſure ſoftned, thy filthy and unclean heart in ſome meaſure purified, thy worldly and covetous heart in ſome meaſure ſpiritualized, thy proud heart in ſome meaſure humbled, and thy barren heart in ſome meaſure made fruitful.

And certainly one ſpecial reaſon why many go drooping and groaning ſo long under the bondage of corruption,

on, under the weight and burden of their ſpiritual maladies, and diſeaſes, is, becauſe they do not go unto Chriſt by prayer for freedom from the ſame: or through the weakneſs of their faith, they do not believe Chriſt is, as able, ſo willing to help and deliver them. For what Chriſt ſaid to the poor man who came unto him in behalf of his poſſeſſed Child, the ſame he ſaith to thee, *If thou canſt believe, all things are poſſible to him that believeth*, Mark 9. 23.

Obj. Some are apt to ſay, I have often gone unto Chriſt by Prayer, earneſtly begging of him to ſtrengthen my weak graces, to ſubdue my ſtrong luſts and corruptions, to mollifie my hard heart, &c. but I cannot pray in faith, I cannot believe that he is, as able, ſo willing to grant my requeſts.

Anſw. 1. *Thou mayeſt pray in faith, even then when thou thinkeſt thou doſt not believe.* Weak Chriſtians are often miſtaken here, ſuppoſing that if they be not confidently perſwaded that God will hear them, they do not pray in faith. Whereas it is not a confidence that God will hear us, but a dependance upon Chriſt in hope of audience, that is our ſweet evidence of faith in prayer. Thou ſayeſt thou prayeſt, and prayeſt, but canſt not be perſwaded that the holy God will hear the prayers of ſuch a vile and unworthy wretcht, and thereupon concludeſt that thou doſt not pray in faith. But let me ask thee, *Doſt thou offer up thy prayers in the name of Chriſt? doſt thou depend upon him in hope of an anſwer for his ſake?* this is praying in faith.

2. *Morn and weep for the weakneſs of thy faith.*

3. *Be earneſt with God in prayer that he would ſtrengthen it.*

4. *Know that thy corruption neither is, nor will be utterly deſtroyed, ſo long as thou liveſt here in this world*; neither will thy ſpiritual maladies and diſeaſes be quite cured, but they do and will continue in ſome meaſure and degree, partly *to bring down thy pride*, which of all ſins is the moſt odious and abominable unto God; and *to advance thy humility*, which of all graces is moſt pleaſing and acceptable unto God: and partly that thou mayeſt have frequent occaſion of going unto God by prayer for help and ſtrength;

ſtrength againſt the power of thy luſts and corruptions.

5. *Know, that power againſt ſin, increaſe of grace, an humble, tender, clean heart, are mercies as worth the praying for, ſo worth the waiting for.* Chriſts delays are no denials: thou canſt not ſay, he will not, becauſe yet he hath not given thee thy deſires. Be not weary of ſeeking; in due ſeaſon thou ſhalt reap, if thou faint not.

Before I leave this point, I ſhall add one word by way of caution. Beware thou miſtake not thy ſelf.

Take not thy ſelf to be *one of little faith*, whileſt thou haſt *no faith*. Let not unbelievers catch at the comforts and encouragements that belong to the leaſt of Saints; that which is *their meat*, will be *thy poiſon*. Comforts, falſely applyed, though they be ſweet in the mouth, will prove curſes in the belly. Haſt thou no faith? Oh tremble, this is the word that belongs to thee, *He that believeth not ſhall be damned*, Mark 16. 16. Though to him that *hath* ſhall be given, yet to him that *hath not*, ſhall be taken away, even that which he ſeemeth to have.

He that hath the leaſt faith, is a reſolved enemy of all ſin, a reſolved friend of holineſs, is reſolved to hang upon Chriſt, to cleave unto Chriſt, to follow him to the death in righteouſneſs and holineſs of life, though he ſtill do queſtion whether Chriſt be his or no.

Is it not thus with thee? Beware how thou catch at the forementioned comforts. Yet this let me ſay to thee alſo, if thou haſt not faith, wilt thou go to Chriſt for faith? If thou canſt not go unto Chriſt *as a Believer*, wilt thou go to him *as a Sinner*? If thou art not yet in a ſtate of Salvation, art thou willing to be ſaved? Art thou willing to learn of Chriſt, to ask his counſel, *what muſt I do to be ſaved?* wilt thou go thus to Chriſt, *Lord cameſt thou not into the world to ſave ſinners? to make interceſſion for tranſgreſſors? to ſeek and to ſave them which are loſt? Oh wilt thou ſave* this *ſinner?* my *ſinful ſoul, Lord? I fear I am none of thine, but wilt thou make me thine? I come to thy door, I lye at thy feet, a poor loſt ſoul, an undone creature; Oh wilt thou take me in, and make me one of thy Diſciples?* Wilt thou thus come to Chriſt? Even thou alſo art one of thoſe that he calls to; *He came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*, Mat. 9. 13.

Thus

Thus much of Chriſts entertaining *Nicodemus.*

Come we now to the firſt general point whereof Chriſt diſcourſeth with *Nicodemus*, and that was *the Doctrine of Regeneration*, in theſe words, *Verily, Verily, I ſay unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God.* In which we may note,

1. *The manner of propounding it.*
2. *The matter and ſubſtance of it.*

For the *manner*, it is propounded with a *double aſſeveration, Verily, Verily, I ſay unto thee.* In the *Greek* it is Ἀμὴν, ἀμὴν, *Amen, Amen*, which in the *Hebrew* ſignifieth *truth.* The aſſeveration is doubled, to ſtir up attention in *Nicodemus*, who being yet in great meaſure ignorant of the fundamental principles of Religion, might happily have lightly eſteemed this doctrine of *Regeneration*, and therefore to ſtir up his attention, Chriſt uſeth this double aſſeveration, *verily, verily, I ſay unto thee.* Which was a form of ſpeech often uſed by our Saviour when he would ſolemnly avouch any weighty truth. He never uſed it but in matters of great moment. By it therefore our Saviour giveth us to underſtand, *that the truth here delivered is a weighty truth, not lightly to be regarded, and ſlightly paſſed over.* For he who gave this commandment, *Let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay*, would never have added this *double aſſeveration*, if there had not been need thereof. Chriſt therefore having prefixed *this preface* to the following truths, doth thereby ſtir us up to give, as the more credit, ſo the more diligent heed thereto. Yea and thereby ſhews *the doctrine of Regeneration* to be a moſt important point; neceſſary to be known and learned of all.

The *matter* or *ſubſtance* of the Doctrine of Regeneration, as Chriſt hath laid it down, followeth in theſe words, *Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God.*

For or the more profitable handling whereof, I ſhall,

1. *Clear the words by giving you the ſenſe and meaning of them.*
2. *Raiſe and proſecute ſuch points of Doctrine as they afford unto us.*

For the clearing of the words. *Except a man*

In

In the Greek it is, ἐὰν μὴ τίς, *Except any.* This indefinite particle joyned with an excluſive hath the force of a general. As if our Saviour had ſaid, *No man can enter into heaven except he be born again*; ſo as he ſpeaketh not only of notorious ſinners, as *adulterers, drunkards, ſwearers,* &c. but of all who are in their natural condition, though they live never ſo unblamably, free from all ſcandalous ſins, if they be not born again, their *civil righteouſneſs* will do them little good, for *they ſhall never ſee the Kingdom of God.*

Be born] *Except a man be born,* This is ſpoken *metaphorically and ſpiritually,* in alluſion to our natural birth, which *Nicodemus* not obſerving, clean miſconſtrued Chriſts words.

Now this word *born,* or *begotten,* is uſed to ſhew that the whole nature of man muſt be changed, and in a manner new framed, not in regard of the *ſubſtance,* but of the *qualities* of it. The natural eſſence and ſubſtance either of the ſoul or body is not deſtroyed, but ſtill remaineth, only it is *diveſted* of the old, and *inveſted* with new qualities. He that is *regenerated* hath a *renewed underſtanding,* a *renewed will, renewed affections,* yea *new deſires,* and a *new converſation.* So that the meaning is, *No man can enter into heaven unleſs by the ſpirit of God he be firſt altered and changed from what he was,* even brought out of the ſtate of nature into the ſtate of grace, and ſo become a *new creature,* as in regard of his new manner of *creation,* ſo in regard of his new manner of *converſation,* leading another manner of life than he did before.

Born *again*] The original word ἄνωθεν tranſlated *again,* is as well attributed to *place,* as to *time,* and ſignifieth *above,* as well as *again,* as *verſe.* 31. And indeed this is the moſt uſual ſignification of the word, and therefore ſome tranſlate it ſo here, *except a man be born from above,* as it is in our old tranſlation. And though our new Tranſlators of the Bible have altered it, yet have they put in the Margin *from above.*

But queſtionleſs in this place the word ſignifieth *again*: for ſo *Nicodemus* taketh it, verſe 4. *how can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the ſecond time into his Mothers Womb, and be born?* So that the word

here

here hath reſpect to the *time* more then to the *place*, and implyeth the neceſſity of a ſecond birth, that a man be born *of the ſpirit*, as well as born *of the fleſh*, otherwiſe it had been better for him, he had never been born at all.

He cannot ſee the Kingdom of God] *Kingdom* is here taken for that happy eſtate whereunto God bringeth his elect in Chriſt, the entrance thereunto is *in this life*, which is commonly called the *Kingdom of grace*. The full poſſeſſion, is *in the life to come*, called the *Kingdom of glory*. Theſe are not two diſtinct Kingdoms, but two degrees of one and the ſame Kingdom. Now whereas Chriſt ſaith, *He cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*, it's in effect as much as, *He cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, as our Saviour clearly explaineth, verſe 5. *Except a man be born of water, and of the ſpirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, that is, He cannot be ſaved.

Having thus cleared the words, by ſhewing you the ſenſe and meaning of them; They afford unto us this point of Doctrine:

Doct. *Regeneration is neceſſary to ſalvation*: Or, *To make a man a member of the inviſible Church, and ſo an heir of Gods Kingdom, it is neceſſary that he be regenerate and born again, and thereby brought out of the ſtate of nature into the ſtate of grace.*

This very Doctrine for ſubſtance is again inculcated, verſe 5. *Verily, Verily, I ſay unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the ſpirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Now our Saviours twice repeating this Doctrine, both in *verſe* 3. and *verſe* 5. and in both places prefixing a double aſſeveration, *Verily, Verily*, doth notable confirm the truth of it, and therefore there needs no farther proof thereof.

But for the better conceiving, and right applyng this Doctrine, I ſhall ſhew you,

1. *The Nature of Regeneration, what it is.*
2. *The Parts of Regeneration.*
3. *The cauſes which concur to the work of Regeneration.*
4. *The Reaſons proving the neceſſity of Regeneration to Salvation.*
5. *The uſes of the point.*

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the Nature of Regeneration, What it is.

I. *REgeneration is that grace whereby a natural man is made a ſpiritual or new man.* Even he that by ſin was a Child of the Devil, is made a Child of God. For as by vertue of our *natural birth*, that which was no man is made a man, or Son of *man*. So by this *Spiritual Birth*, he that was a *natural man* is made a *new man*, even a *ſpiritual man*, a *Child of God*. So that to ſpeak properly, *Regeneration is another Birth after the former*. A *ſpiritual* Birth after our *natural* Birth, whereby a man is as it were *another man*. As it is ſaid of *Caleb*, that he was a man of *another ſpirit*. So may it be ſaid of a *regenerate man*, that he is of *another ſpirit*, being quite altered and changed from what he was before.

Now this *regeneration*, or *new Birth* cannot be meant of a Birth *after the fleſh*, for *no natural or carnal thing* is to be conceipted *in regeneration*. But regeneration is *a ſpiritual Birth*, a *Birth of the ſpirit*, as is evident by thoſe words, *that which is born of the ſpirit is ſpirit*, Joh. 3.6. So as by the work of regeneration *fleſh* is turned into *ſpirit*, that is, *the carnal corrupt diſpoſition of man, is changed and altered into a renewed and ſanctified diſpoſition*? whereby it appears that *Regeneration* is as it were a *new creation*, and a *regenerate man* is called a *new creature*, being renewed throughout, both thorow his ſoul with all the powers and faculties thereof; and thorow his body, with all the parts and members thereof. So that the *blind underſtanding* is in ſome meaſure inlightned with the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt. The *ſtubborn and contumacious will* is in ſome meaſure obedient and conformable to the will of God. The *ſeared and benummed conſcience* is now quickned and awakened. The *hard heart* ſoftned, the *unruly affections* crucified: And the *body* with all the *parts* and *members* thereof are made ready

ready inſtruments to put in execution the good intentions of the mind. Thus by Regeneration men are wrought upon *throughout*, being wonderfully altered and changed from what they were before: in relation to which alteration they are ſaid to be *born again*. Which may imform us of the wonderful depravation of our nature, which was ſuch, as mending and repairing would not ſerve the turn, but God muſt *new make*, and *new create* us, we muſt be *born again*, made *new creatures*.

Which conſideration ſhould me-thinks take away all ground of boaſting from any man, and ſtir up every regenerate perſon to give unto God the praiſe and the glory of his happy change, ſaying, *Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praiſe and the glory of this great work.*

Queſt. *Doth Regeneration admit any degrees?*

Anſw. *Yes Verily.* For *Regeneration* may be conſidered in the *beginning*, and *Progreſs of it*: or in the *conſummation* and *perfection* of it.

It is begun and increaſeth in this life; it is conſummate and perfect in the life to come.

In this life there is ſpirit mixed with fleſh, that is grace with ſome corruption of nature, as is evident by the Apoſtles complaint in theſe words, *When I would do good evil is preſent with me. For I delight in the Law of God after the inward man; But I ſee another Law in my members warring againſt the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of ſin, which is in my members,* Rom. 7. 21, 22, 23. So that ſin and corruption doth remain in all the regenerate, as long as their ſouls remain in their mortal bodies, it *remains* though it doth not *reign in them*. It is in this life *caſt down*, but not *caſt out: Habitat ſed non regnat, manet ſed non dominatur, dejectum ſed non ejectum tamen*, &c. Bernard. in Serm. 10. on Pſa. 90.

And this God in great wiſdom is pleaſed to permit, to keep us humble and low in our ſelves, and to drive us unto Jeſus Chriſt, and that as long as this *flux of blood runneth*, we ſhould alwayes be deſirous to *touch at leaſt the hem of his garment*.

But at death that corruption will beutterly conſumed, and body and ſoul clean freed from it: inſomuch as at the

the reſurrection when body and ſoul ſhall be again united, the regeneration begun in this world, will be manifeſted to be moſt perfect. Whereas in this life the moſt regenerate are imperfect, through the Reliques of ſin and remainder of corruption, which will abide in them ſo long as they abide, and continue in this World.

Now ſeeing the work of Regeneration is imperfect in the very beſt here in this life, and that there remains fleſh and corruption in them, ſo long as they remain in this World, Do not thou look too high, I mean, after a greater meaſure and degree of grace than here is to be had. Many there are, who being regenerate by the ſpirit of God, and ſo brought out of the ſtate of nature into the ſtate of grace, preſently look for a freedom from all ſin and corruption, which becauſe they find working and ſtirring in them, thereupon queſtion the work of Regeneration and truth of grace in their ſouls. But let ſuch know, that they look for more than here is to be found, or then God expects from them.

For God doth not expect or require of us here, freedom from ſin and corruption, but that we ſhould endeavour to ſubdue and mortifie it more and more, according to the meaſure of grace and ſtrength which we have received from him. He doth not require of us that we be without ſin, but that ſin do not rule nor reign in our mortal bodies, according to that of the Apoſtle, Rom.6.12. *Let not ſin reign in your mortal bodies.* Neither doth the Lord require of us exact and perfect righteouſneſs, which is impoſſible to our corrupt nature, but only that *we ſtrive* and labour after it, that we ſincerely endeavour *to ſerve him* after the directions of his Word. And that for our failings and imperfections we do in an humble confeſſion bewail the ſame, and then beg the pardon and forgiveneſs of them, in and through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt. And this God will accept of, for he eſteemeth more of our *affections* then of our *actions*, and accepteth the *will* for the *deed*, according to that of the Apoſtle, 2 Cor.8.12. *If there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Parts of Regeneration, and Cauſes concurring thereunto.

HAving ſhewed you *what regeneration is*, and *how it doth admit degrees*. I ſhall ſhew you the *Parts of Regeneration*, which are two; 1. *Mortification.* 2. *Vivification.*

Mortification is implyed under the phraſes of *caſting off, and crucifying the old man*, and *deſtroying the body of ſin.* This is a duty expreſly enjoyned in theſe words, *mortifie your members which are upon the earth*, *Col*,3.5. By *members on the earth*, he meaneth all ſorts of luſts and ſins whereunto a natural man is given, as is evident by the particular inſtances which he himſelf reckoneth up in the words following, as *fornication, uncleanneſs*, &c.

Theſe muſt be *mortified*, that is, *put to death.* It is not enough to curb, and hold in ſin, but the life of it muſt be let out. And indeed it is not poſſible to put on *the new man*, till the *old man* be caſt off. Therefore there is a neceſſity of *mortification* firſt, before *vivification.* For the bringing in of one form preſuppoſeth the putting out, or deſtroying of the other. Wherefore after Mortification followeth Vivification.

2. *Vivification* is the begetting of the life of grace in us, whence we live in holineſs and righteouſneſs. It is ſet forth in Scripture by *Gods quickning us*, and by *our walking in newneſs of life*, *Eph.*2.5.

Viviſication then implyeth a new ſpiritual life, which God by his ſpirit worketh in us,which is clean contrary to our former natural, corrupt courſe of life. For the effects of this life are holineſs and righteouſneſs, and all manner of good works.

Now it is abſolutely neceſſary, that this part of regeneration, namely *Vivification*, be added to *Mortification*, which is the other part, even as neceſſary as that Chriſt

being dead ſhould be raiſed. Where had been the benefit of Chriſts death, if he had not riſen from the dead? And what can be imagined to be the profit of mortification without vivification? It is therefore the accuſtomed courſe of Sacred Scripture to infer the following of holineſs, upon the flying of ſin: the doing of good, upon eſchewing of evil. Now the things which God hath joyned together, let no man put aſunder.

Let us therefore prove our regeneration not only by ceaſing from ſin, but following holineſs, and working righteouſneſs. Content not thy ſelf to ſay, *I am not what I was*, unleſs thou canſt alſo add, *I am what I was not*. It will be but little boot to thee to ſay, I am no drunkard, nor ſwearer, nor covetous, nor a walker after the fleſh: unleſs thou canſt alſo ſay, By the grace of God, I now walk after the ſpirit, in faith and love, and holy obedience, watchfull unto, and endeavouring after a fruitfulneſs in every good work. Thou art not *unjuſt*, (thou ſayeſt) but doeſt thou *ſhew mercy*? Thou art no longer *earthly*; but art thou *heavenly minded*? Thou art no longer *contentious*, or quarrelſome: but art thou *a peace-maker*? Thou haſt no longer *fellowſhip with the ungodly*, but art thou a *familiar of the Saints*? Thou wilt not now curſe, or ſwear, or lye, or ſcoff, but doſt thou pray and bleſs? Doſt thou hear and read, and meditate on God? Doſt thou ſtudy thine heart, and govern thy thoughts and affections? Doſt thou bridle thy tongue; ſet a watch over thine eyes, and ears, and ſteps? Is it thy care to pleaſe, and in all things to walk worthy the Lord? Look to thy ſelf, that thou be not deceived. Caſt off the works of darkneſs, and put on the armour of light. Caſt off the old man, and put on the new man, which as it is created after the *image*, So will it carry thee on according to the will of God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.

Having ſhewed the Nature of Regeneration, and the parts thereof. I come now to ſhew what Cauſes concurr to the work of Regeneration.

1. *The efficient cauſe*, or primary Author is God. For in this reſpect we are *born of God. God hath begotten*

gotten us Jam 1. 18. Even *God the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

2. The procuring cauſes are Gods *will*, and Gods *mercy*. There could be nothing out of God to move him. It muſt needs therefore ariſe from his own meer will. So ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, *Of his own will begat he us* Jam. 1. 1. And there could be nothing in man to move God hereunto; for man by nature is moſt miſerable. It muſt needs therefore ariſe from Gods meer mercy. For miſery is the proper object of mercy. On this ground it is juſtly ſaid that God 1 Pet. 1. 3. *according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again.*

3. The immediate worker of Regeneration is *Gods Spirit*: In this reſpect we are ſaid to be *born of the Spirit* Joh. 3. 4. and regeneration is ſtiled the *renewing of the holy Ghoſt* Tit. 3. 5. For it is a divine work above humane ability.

4. The ordinary inſtrumental cauſe is Gods word. *Of his own will begat he us by the Word of truth*, Jam. 1. 18. whereby is meant the Goſpel. In this reſpect the Word is ſtiled *incorruptible ſeed* 1 Pet, 1 23. The Goſpel is that part of Gods Word which is moſt effectual hereunto, and it is thereupon ſtiled the *Goſpel of ſalvation*, Eph. 1, 13. And the *power of God unto ſalvation*, Rom. 1. 16.

5. Miniſters and preachers of the Goſpel are Miniſterial cauſes of Regeneration, who are in relation to their Miniſtery ſaid to *beget us*, and ſtiled *Fathers*. 1 Cor. 4, 15.

All theſe are compriſed under the *Efficient* cauſe, and are ſo far from thwarting one another, as they ſweetly concurr to produce this divine work of Regeneration, being ſubordinate one to another, and may in this order be placed together. It being the *will* of *God* to ſhew *mercy* to man, he ordained *Miniſters* to caſt the ſeed of his *Word* into mens ſouls, which being quickned by the *Spirit*, men are thereby born again.

II. The *material* cauſe of Regeneration, is the parts whereof it doth conſiſt, which are two,

1. *Mortification*. 2. *Vivification*; of both which I

have ſpoken in the fore-going Chapter,

III. The *formal* cauſe of Regeneration is Gods Image planted in us, which conſiſts in holineſs and righteouſneſs. After this Image we are ſaid to be *renewed*, Eph.4.24. This makes an eſſential difference betwixt a natural and a regenerate man.

IV. The *final* cauſes next and ſubordinate to the glory of Gods free-grace and rich mercy, are eſpecially two;

1. *To make men able to do good:* namely ſuch good as may be acceptable and honourable to God, profitable to other men, and truly advantageable to themſelves. The Apoſtle therefore ſpeaking of Regeneration (which we have ſhewed to be a kind of Creation) thus expreſſeth this end, *we are created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.* Eph. 2.10.

2. *To make men fit for glory.* For corrupt fleſh cannot partake of Cœleſtial glory. Whereupon ſaith Chriſt, *Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God:* So far ſhall he be from being admitted into it, as he ſhall not come ſo near as to ſee it. God will not take a ſinner reeking in his luſts, and preſently inveſt him with a Crown of glory. And therefore that we may be fitted for Heaven, the Lord is pleaſed by his ſpirit to regenerate us, making us *new-creatures*,, and thereby making us *meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light.*

Behold the Riches of Gods mercy and goodneſs, that he not only created us at firſt in a moſt happy eſtate, even after his own image and likeneſs: But when we wittingly and willfully fell from the ſame, and plunged ourſelves into miſery, wherein he might juſtly have left us, as he did the evil Angls. Yet he hath not only reſtored us again to that former eſtate, by renewing his image in us: but thereby fitted us for a more glorious and excellent eſtate: wherein his goodneſs appeareth to be as his greatneſs, infinite, incomprehenſible. Who can ſufficienily ſet it forth? *For as the Heaven is high above the earth, ſo great is his mercy towards them that fear him,* Pſal. 103. 11.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Sheweth the Reaſons *why Regeneration is neceſſary to Salvation.*

HAving ſpoken of the point by way of *explication*; I come now to ſpeak of it by way of *confirmation*. To this end I ſhall ſhew you the *reaſons* of the point, why *Regeneration is neceſſary to Salvation.*

Reaſ. 1. *From the immutability of Gods purpoſe.* God who hath choſen us to life, hath choſen us alſo to holineſs, as our way to it. *We are bound to give thanks to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you to Salvation, through the Sanctification of the Spirit*, 2 Theſ. 2. 13. Whoever will paſs into glory, muſt take grace in his way. You ask, why may I not be ſaved, unleſs I be regenerated? Why! becauſe God is reſolved on the contrary. *This is the will of God, your ſanctification firſt, and then your ſalvation*, 1 Theſ. 4. 3. Now the purpoſes of God ſhall ſtand. *With him is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning.* All the world ſhall ſooner be damned, then the purpoſe of God ſhall be made void. The Lord God muſt ceaſe to be the unchangeable God, if thou ever be ſaved, who wilt not be ſanctified.

Reaſ. 2. *From the ſtability of Gods word.* God hath ſaid, *Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Is the word of God yea and nay? doth he ſay and unſay? *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, but his word ſhall not paſs away*, Mat. 24. 35. Count upon it ſinner, as ſure as God is true, thou ſhalt never ſee the ſalvation of God, unleſs thou be firſt made partaker of the renewing of the holy Ghoſt.

Reaſ. 3. *From the reſpect that Regeneration hath to Salvation.* Regeneration is a degree and part of Salvation. Grace is glory begun, holineſs is the beginning of bleſſedneſs, the perfection whereof will be in Heaven hereafter, where *the image of God, which conſiſteth*

ſiſteth in knowledge, holineſs, and righteouſneſs will be perfected in our ſouls, where we ſhall perfectly love God, and delight in him, and be ever praiſing him with the Heavenly hoſt. Now, how canſt thou expect the participation and enjoyment of this bleſſed eſtate without regeneration and renovation here? Unleſs the image of God be renewed upon thee in holineſs? and thou doſt truly love God, and delight in communion with him here? Canſt thou expect the conſummation without a beginning! to be perfectly holy hereafter, and not initially holy here! to live with God in glory hereafter, and yet here live and lye in thy filthineſs and uncleanneſs! Canſt thou expect hereafter to live in the everlaſting love of God, and yet here have no true love to him at all? Canſt thou expect hereafter fulneſs of delight in the preſence of God, and yet here have no delight in him at all? But takeſt thy whole delight either in ſatisfying thy covetous humour by heaping up riches, or in gratifying thy ſinful luſt and affections, by yielding to the ſolicitations of the fleſh?

Be not deceived, as I ſaid before, ſo I muſt ſay it again, Grace is a neceſſary beginning of glory; As ſin is death begun, and hell begun, ſo is grace the firſt fruits of life and glory. And as certain as it is, that he ſhall never find an hell hereafter, who is purged from his ſins here; ſo undoubtedly certain is it, that he ſhall never come into the *divine preſence* hereafter, who is not here made partaker of the *divine nature*; he ſhall never enter into the *Kingdom of glory*, who is not firſt born into the *Kingdom of grace*. Be a *convert* in this world, or thou wilt be a *reprobate* in the other World. Thou mayeſt as well expect a birth where there hath been nothing formed in the Womb; a Noon-tide where there hath been no dawning, as ever look to ſee the *day-light of glory*, who haſt never known the *morning of grace*.

Reaſ. 4. *From that corruption of mans Nature in which he is brought into the World.* For our firſt Parents having by their fall defaced that image of God in which they were at firſt created, and being thereupon corrupted and polluted in every power of their ſoul, and part

part of their body; all that come from them are in like manner corrupted and polluted, an unclean offſpring from unclean progenitors. *For who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one,* as *Job ſpeaketh* Job 14.4. And ſaith our Saviour, *That which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh* Joh. 3. 6. that is, Every one that is born of man, every mothers Child is carnal and corrupt: every man by his firſt birth is polluted and unclean: Now *no unclean perſon can enter into Gods Kingdom* Rev.21.27. Believe it Sinner, God will never take thee from the dunghill reeking in thy Luſts, and ſet thee down by him in the Throne. The holy land was never deſigned to be peopled with Dogs and Swine. *Without ſhall be Dogs* Rev.22. *Corruption ſhall not inherit incorruption,* nor ſhall fleſh and blood inherit the Kingdom of God. *Baſtards* may not inherit. Thou muſt firſt be *a child,* and have the ſpirit of a child in thee, and then thou art an *heir,* an *heir of God,* and *a joynt heir with Chriſt.*

Reaſ. 5, *From the holineſs of Gods nature,* which is ſuch that no unclean perſon can ſtand in his preſence. There is a contrariety between the holy nature of God, and the unholy nature of carnal and unregenerate men. And therefore what communion can there be between them? Between an holy God, and unholy creatures? Between a pure God, and impure creatures? Surely none at all. So much the Apoſtle expreſſeth 2 Cor.6.14. where he ſaith, *what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs?* Or the righteous God with unrighteous men? *what communion hath light with darkneſs?* which interrogation implyeth a ſtrong negation. Believe it ſinners, if ever you look to enjoy communion with God in glory, you muſt have union with him in grace; you muſt here be regenerate, and become new creatures: yea holy as he is holy, that you may be ſuch as he may dwell withall, and delight in. For as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh Heb. 12. 14. *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* He ſhall be ſo far from enjoying the preſence of God, that he ſhall not ſo much as ſee him.

CHAP. VI.

An Uſe of Exhortation to endeavour after Regeneration; with quickning Motives thereunto.

HAving thus done with the *Explication* and *Confirmation* of the point; Come we now to the *Uſe and Application* thereof.

I. The firſt may be an *Uſe of Exhortation*, both to the *Unregenerate* and to the *Regenerate*.

Firſt to the Unregenerate: Is Regeneration abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation? Oh then how doth it concern you who are yet in your ſins, and under the power of corrupt nature, earneſtly to deſire, and induſtriouſly to labour after this ſaving change, in the uſe of all means God hath ſanctified thereunto? Let your outward condition be what it will, be ye never ſo rich, never ſo honourable, yet far be it from you to ſit down ſatisfied in any condition, till you be renewed, and ſanctified by the ſpirit of God. Alas, how many be there in the world, who though in their natural and carnal eſtate, yet live as ſecurely and as merrily, as if their condition were as ſafe and good as the beſt! Ask them one by one, Whether the work of Regeneration be wrought in their ſouls? and ſome will anſwer, they hope it is, others that they never doubted it; though none of them know what Regeneration is, nor ever minded any ſuch thing. And yet theſe men have not only read, but do likewiſe believe the words of our Saviour, who hath told them, *that except they be born again, they cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Joh. 3. 3.

Ah ſinner, I beſeech thee for the ſake of thy precious and immortal ſoul, to ſtir up in thy ſelf an hearty deſire, and ſincere endeavour after this bleſſed work. As it is *the one thing neceſſary to ſalvation*, ſo let it be the main thing of thy deſire and endeavour. There is nothing deſerves precedency in thy thoughts, aims, and labours before this. *David* reſolved not to *give ſleep to his eyes*,

nor

nor ſlumber to his eye-lids, till he found out an habitation for the Lord, Pſal. 132.4. The habitation which pleaſeth God moſt, *is thine heart*, but it muſt be a *renewed* heart. Oh how dareſt thou ſleep a night in that houſe, where God doth not dwell? and he dwells not in thee, unleſs thou beeſt Regenerated by his holy Spirit. In the fear of God therefore ſee thou give no reſt to thy ſoul, no eaſe to thy mind, till thou find a bleſſed change wrought in thee, till thou findeſt thou art brought out of the ſtate of nature, into the ſtate of grace. Neither ſit down ſatisfied in the enjoyment of any worldly comfort, without the enjoyment of this mercy. And indeed how canſt thou live merrily or ſleep quietly, ſo long as thou liveſt in thine unregenerate eſtate? in which if thou ſhouldeſt die, thou wouldeſt periſh for ever, even to all Eternity. Eſpecially conſidering the *uncertainty of thy life*, whether thou ſhalt live a day, or an hour longer.

For the more profitable handling this Uſe; I ſhall.

1. Give you ſome *Motives* to quicken up your deſires and endeavours after the work of Regeneration.

2. Shew you the *Means* to be performed for the better attaining thereunto.

The Motives may be drawn to theſe three heads:

1. The *Excellency*. 2. The *Utility*. 3. The *Neceſſity* of Regeneration.

I. For the firſt, the *Excellency* thereof will appear from theſe four particulars:

1. *Regeneration doth enoble a man, raiſe him up towards his Original perfection.* Man was made the nobleſt of all creatures in this viſible World, *in the image and likeneſs of God.* Sin defaced the Image of God, and ſtamped the Image of the Devil upon him. A ſinner is a man degenerated into a beaſt; *Man being in honour abideth not, but is like the beaſts that periſh*, Pſal. 49. 12. He lives like a beaſt, and dies like a beaſt, not knowing whither he goeth. *Every man is brutiſh in his knowledge*, Jer. 10. 14. He hath a brutiſh heart, lives a brutiſh life. By *grace* man comes to himſelf, is raiſed up from a beaſt to a man again, renewed after the Image of God; The Spirit of glory and of God ſhines forth in him. There's more of the glory

of

of God ſeen in a Saint, then in all the works of God under the Sun : nay than in the glorious Sun in the Heavens. The *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars* fall ſhort of the glory of the *new-creature*. *In illis tantum ſunt opera Dei, in hac eſt imago Dei.* Aug.

2. *The Excellency of Regeneration appears, in that it makes a man a true Chriſtian.* A man is not really a Chriſtian, becauſe he hath been Baptized, beareth the name, and frequenteth the ordinances of Chriſt : but becauſe he is Regenerated by the Spirit of Chriſt, and thereby tranſlated out of a ſtate of ſin and death, into a ſtate of life and peace. For as under the law, *he was not a Jew, who was one outwardly, being circumciſed in the fleſh* : *But he was a Jew who was one inwardly, being circumciſed in his heart and ſpirit*, In like manner, he is no true Chriſtian, who is only outwardly Baptized, but he who is inwardly Baptized by the Spirit, and whoſe heart is changed and renewed.

3. *The Excellency of this new birth appears in this, that it is the beginning of eternal life and happineſs* : even of the ſame life which we ſhall live hereafter in Heaven with the Saints, and glorious Angels to all Eternity. Grace here is not only an evidence of glory hereafter; but it is the beginning of that glory, which hereafter we ſhall more fully enjoy in Heaven : Grace and glory differ only in degree : for grace is glory begun here, and glory is grace conſummated, and perfected hereafter. Now conſidering that this is ſuch an excellent ſtate, how doth it concern you as earneſtly to deſire, ſo induſtriouſly to endeavour after it, in the uſe of all means God hath ſanctified.

II. *Another Motive may be taken from the Utility of Regeneration.* If it be demanded, *What is the profit thereof?* we may anſwer as the *Apoſtle* did of *Circumciſion*, *Much every way.* For this is, that *Godlineſs, which is profitable unto all things, having promiſes of the life that now is, and of that which is to come* that is, it hath Heaven and Earth entailed on it, and therfore muſt needs be profitable. The Regenerate therefore are called *heirs of the Promiſes* Heb. 6. 17. Such only have the true riches, being *rich in faith*, as the Apoſtle *James* calleth them Jam. 2 5. As

Laodicea

Laodicea was *poor*, though abounding in outward fulneſs. So theſe are *truly rich*, though deſtitute of many outward things, having an intereſt in God, who is the fountain of all bleſſings. How ſhould the conſideration hereof ſtir you up, as earneſtly to thirſt, ſo ſincerely to endeavour after this bleſſed ſtate!

III. *Another Motive may be taken from the neceſſity of Regeneration. It is abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation.* It had been better for thee never to have been born, than not to be born again. It is as neceſſary as Heaven and happineſs. For ſaith our Saviour himſelf, *Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee*, much leſs enter into, *the Kingdom of Heaven.* So that there is no hope of the Salvation of any unregenerate man, or woman: but if they live and die in that eſtate, their portion will be death and damnation with the Devils and damned to all Eternity. And in regard of the *uncertainty* of their lives, they are not ſure to be out of Hell one day longer.

Ah ſinner! What doſt thou mean then to continue in thy carnal and unregenerate eſtate? As ſure as the word of God is true, if thou dye therein, thou art ſhut out of all hope of mercy for ever: and ſhalt paſs into eaſeleſs, and endleſs miſery. In the fear of God therefore, when thou riſeſt up in the Morning, conſider with thy ſelf, that thou art uncertain of being out of Hell till the Evening. And when thou lyeſt down, conſider how uncertain thou art of being out of Hell till the next morning. Surely this conſideration is enough to amaze any poor Chriſtian who is indeed Regenerate, but maketh ſome queſtion thereof in himſelf. How much more ſhould it amaze, and ſtartle thee who art yet in thy carnal and ſinful eſtate? and ſtir thee up without any farther delay to eſcape for thy life, and make out in haſt after thy Redemption from this dreadful condition.

I would ask thee this queſtion, Whether if thou ſhouldſt put off thy ſeeking after the great work of Regeneration and converſion till another year, week, or day, thou art ſure to be then on this ſide the grave, or on this ſide hell? Certain it is, thou haſt no aſſurance of thy life for one day longer. Nay, I dare boldly ſay, thou thy ſelf knoweſt

knoweſt and beliveſt as much. Ah ſinner, what folly, yea what madneſs is it then for thee wilfully to live one day longer in ſuch an eſtate, in which if thou ſhouldſt dye, thou art without hope of recovery, undone for ever.

Obj. Haply thou wilt ſay, though I am not ſure to live another day, yet I am likely, being in good health and ſtrength of body.

Anſw. How many as ſtrong and healthfull as thy ſelf, have ſuddenly by death been ſnatched away? And why maiſt not thou be as ſoon taken away, having no Leaſe of thy Life? who then but a fool or a mad-man woul adventure his eternal happineſs upon ſuch an hazard? Oh therefore, as thou tendereſt the everlaſting good of thy precious ſoul, put not off this great and weighty work a day longer: *for who knoweth what a day may bring forth?* Prov. 27. 1.

Hadſt thou been taken away in the ſtate thou art in, how ſad had thy caſe been? where hadſt thou been at this hour? Certainly thou art not able to conceive the dreadfulneſs of that miſery thou ſhouldſt now have been in. And haſt thou lived all this while in ſo great danger, and wilt thou live in it ſtill? God forbid! Hath a miracle of mercy kept thee out of hell ſo long; and wilt thou yet continue ſecurely in ſuch danger of it? Oh ungratefull wretch! Queſtionleſs if thou hadſt any ingenuity in thee, thou wouldſt be aſhamed thus to abuſe the patience, and long-ſuffering of God towards thee; which ſhould have led thee to repentance. Thou ſhouldſt rather take up a reſolution, and ſay, though I have hitherto abuſed the patience and long-ſuffering of God, I will abuſe it no more. Though I have often ſlighted and rejected the gracious invitations of Jeſus Chriſt, yet, through the grace of God, I will reject them no more, but cloſe with them, and give up my ſelf unto Chriſt from henceforth to be ruled and governed by him.

God hath allotted to every man who lives in the boſome of the Church a certain day of grace, and time of repentance; which whoſoever neglects, can never be ſaved. Ah ſinner, as therefore thou wouldſt not neglect

neglect thine own Salvation, neglect not thy day of grace, neither let ſlip the ſeaſon of mercy; but as the Apoſtle exhorteth Heb. 3.15. *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation*; If that be once paſt there is no recovering it.

CHAP. VII.

Sheweth the miſerable and dreadful condition of the Unregenerate in their life-time.

HAving given you ſome *Motives* to quicken up your deſires and endeavours after the work of Regeneration. I come now to ſhew you the *Means on your part to be performed for the better attaining thereunto*; which may be brought to theſe two general heads;

1. *The Embracing ſome truths.*
2. *The Practiſing ſome duties.*

The Truths to be embraced are theſe?

1. *That every man in his ſtate of unregeneracy is in a miſerable ſtate, and dreadful condition.*
2. *That there is hope of mercy for the greateſt ſinners.*

That you may the better underſtand the miſerable condition of men in their ſtate of Unregeneracy, I ſhall ſhew you their miſeries:

1. In this life.
2. At death.
3. After death.

Their miſeries in this life are briefly theſe;

I. *They are Servants to ſin, and ſlaves to their luſts*; making it their main work and deſign to ſerve their ſinfull fleſh with its affections. The baſeneſs of this ſlavery under ſin will appear the more, if we ſhall conſider,

1. *What it is we do inthrall thereby, even our precious ſouls*, which at firſt were created after the Image of God, and fitted for his noble ſervice, and communion with

with himſelf. Now for this *immortal Being* to be a *drudge* to baſe pleaſures and profits, to the vain and vile things of this World, is a moſt ſad degeneration.

2. What are the fruits of this ſpirituall bondage and ſlavery.

1. *At the beſt a little ſeeming pleaſure, or profit, that laſts but for a moment*, which the Apoſtle calls, *the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*, Heb. 11.26. they are but of little worth, and but of ſhort continance. And ſure it muſt needs be a point of folly eagerly to purſue theſe ſinfull luſts and pleaſures, which are but light and temporary, which do but appear and vaniſh, to the hazard of thoſe durable riches and eternal pleaſures which are at Gods right hand.

2. Another fruit which uſually follows upon our ſlaviſh ſubjection to our luſts, is *death eternal*; according to that of the Apoſtle, Rom. 6. 23. *the wages of ſin is death*, and that *eternal*, as appeareth by the oppoſition of eternal life: for ſaith the Apoſtle, *The wages of ſin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.* So that as eternal life followeth an holy life, ſo eternal death followeth a ſinful life. This is the reward, ſinner, that thy God whom thou ſerveſt will pay thee at laſt, *thou muſt dye the death.*

Oh the folly and madneſs of this ſenſual enſlaved world! Surely were there nothing in ſin but the preſent ſlavery, it were enough to diſſwade any ingenuous ſpirit. Who would be a ſlave? a ſlave to a luſt? at the command of every unclean motion? at the beck of every brutiſh affection? But if the vileneſs of the work will not deterr thee, will not the dreadfulneſs of the wages neither? which is *eternal death and condemnation.* Oh conſider this you who make ſo light a matter of ſin, and take ſuch pleaſure in obeying the luſts thereof.

II. *All men in the ſtate of unregeneracy are ſervants and ſlaves to the Devil.* Which neceſſarily followeth upon the former, for ſuch as are in ſubjection to their luſts, muſt needs be under the bondage and ſlavery of Satan, in that the chief power he hath over us, is, by luſt to allure us unto ſin. I know all men are apt to ſay, *that they hate and deſie the Devil, and abhor to be his ſlave or*

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ſervant : but yet in the mean time, they obey his ſinfull commands, and thereby declare themſelves to be *his ſervants*, for as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh Rom. 6. 16. *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield your ſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants ye are to whom ye obey.* And ſaith the beloved Diſciple 1 Joh. 3. 8. *He that committeth ſin is of the Devil*, that is, he who gives up himſelf to the committing of ſin, is a ſervant and ſlave to the Devil, for he doth his drudgery.

Oh that the eyes of poor ſinners where opened to ſee who it is that puts them upon all manner of ſin and wickedneſs ! Certainly they would not then be ſo ready and forward thereunto. Oh that they did but know in what a miſerable bondage and ſlavery they are ! Certainly then they would not be ſo merry, and jovial, neither would they ſleep one night quietly in ſuch a ſtate and condition, but they would be caſting about, how they might be freed and delivered from the ſame.

III. *All men in their ſtate of unregeneracy are under the curſe of God, which continually ſo hangeth over their heads*, that they are curſed in every thing.

1. *In there eſtate.* Wealth and Riches are in themſelves good things, even the good bleſſings of God : but yet all the wealth of carnal and unregenerate men are accurſed unto them ; their very *belſſings* are turned into *curſes*, as the Lord threatneth by his Prophet *Malachy* ſaying, *I will curſe their bleſſings.*

Curſed they are, and ſhall be in the City, and in the Field ; in their Basket and in their Store ; in the increaſe of their Kine, and in the flocks of their Sheep, as you have it expreſſed, *Deut.* 28. 17. 18. Though thou enjoyeſt abundance of this Worlds goods, yet ſo long as thou liveſt in thy wicked and ungodly courſes, be it of *lying, ſwearing, cozening, whoring, drinking* and the like, *the curſe of God is in thy ſtore and abundance*, which makes way for thine eternal miſery.

2. *In their names.* Their very name is curſed, for as the *Wiſe man* ſpeaketh Prov. 10. 7. *The memory of the juſt is bleſſed, but the name of the wicked ſhall rot* ; that is, the juſt and righteous ſhall leave a ſweet ſcent behind them, ſo that they ſhall not be mentioned without ſome commendation. But the wicked ſhall leave a ſtinking ſa-

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vour behind them ; ſo that their very names ſhall be loathſome and abominable ; like a rotten carcaſs they ſhall for a while ſtink above ground, and at laſt be utterly forgotten.

3. *In their houſes.* For as the Wiſe man ſpeaketh Prov. 3. 33. *The curſe of the Lord is in the houſe of the wicked.* Though their houſes be never ſo well furniſhed, yet what comfort and content can there be found therein, when the curſe of God is in them ? which is enough to blaſt the beauty, and to eat up the timber and the ſtones thereof. Zech. 5. 4.

4. *In their religious exerciſes. The word which they hear,* is curſed unto them. That which to others *is the ſavour of life unto life,* to them is *the ſavour of death unto death,* being a means to ripen their ſins, and haſten their ruine. The *prayers which they make* are accurſed unto them : oft-times bringing down a curſe rather then a bleſſing. Yea *the Table of the Lord* is likewiſe accurſed unto them, ſo that inſtead of feeding on the body and blood of Chriſt, they eat and drink their own damnation. Oh how ſad and lamentable muſt thy condition needs be, when thoſe things which are not only bleſſings in themſelves, but likewiſe bleſſed unto others, ſhould be curſed unto thee, and heighten both thy ſin and ſorrow. And if thy bleſſings become curſes, O what will thy curſes be !

I V. As the ground and foundation of the curſe, *All men in their ſtate of unregeneracy are under the guilt of all their ſins,* which muſt needs make their condition ſad and dreadful. For as the *man is bleſſed whoſe iniquity is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered,* Pſal. 32. 1. So is he moſt wretched and miſerable, who lyeth under the guilt of ſin without pardon : *His Conſcience being oft-times tormented with ſuch reſtleſs horrours and perplexities,* that though life be moſt ſweet, and hell moſt dreadful, yet it makes a man wilfully to caſt away the one, and willingly to embrace the other, that he may be freed from the horrour of his guilty conſcience. Thus *Judas* ſought eaſe by an halter, and preferred hanging, yea the torments of Hell before the anguiſh of his guilty conſcience. Now thou mayſt make light of unpardoned ſin, thinking it

it no great matter. But the day is coming, when thou wouldeſt give all the world, (if thou hadſt it) for a pardon, which then cannot be had. Therefore as ever thou wouldſt ſtand before Chriſt judgement-ſeat with comfort, and not be caſt into everlaſting burnings, now turn from thy ſins, and be earneſt with God in Prayer, for the pardon of them in and through the merits of Chriſts bloody death and paſſion. Art thou a ſinner, and not a pardoned ſinner? O tremble! What conſcience haſt thou that can let thee ſleep, and ſing and laugh in ſuch a diſmal ſtate?

V. Every man in his ſtate of unregeneracy is liable to all ſorts of judgements.

1. *To temporal judgements*, as pains, ſickneſſes and diſeaſes, loſſes, croſſes, and the like. Haply for the preſent thou maiſt be without them, but thou canſt not promiſe thy ſelf freedom and exemption from the ſame, no not for one day: for they are continually hanging over thine head, ready every moment to ſeize upon thee: and they oftentimes come ſuddenly when they are leaſt expected. It is expreſly noted, that *when the Lord rained Fire and Brimſtone upon* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *at that time the Sun was riſen from the Earth.* Little did the *Sodomites* expect ſo ſtrange a ſhower after ſo fair a Morning. Believe it, this dayes eaſe, and reſt, and mirth may be turned into pangs, and auguiſh, and groanings, and roarings before to morrow.

2. *They are lyable to ſpiritual judgements*, as blindneſs of mind, hardneſs of heart, vileneſs of affections, horrour of conſcience, and the like. The Prophet *Iſaiah* doth elegantly decipher the miſerable condition of an unregenerate man in this reſpect, *The wicked*, ſaith he, *are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt*, Iſa. 57.20. The Sea is not only oft-times outwardly toſſed up and down with winds and tempeſts, but alſo inwardly diſquieted, even with her own motions, caſting up continually mire and dirt. Even ſo the heart of a carnal man is not only many times outwardly troubled with croſſes and afflictions, but alſo inwardly diſquieted with the impetuous violence of filthy luſts, and the reſtleſs terrous and torments of a guilty Conſcience, which are

far ſorer than any outward afflictions, as ſeizing upon the tendereſt part, namely the Soul and Spirit of a man.

3. *They are lyable to eternal judgements.* What can they expect if they dye in their ſtate of unregeneracy, but after this momentary life is ended, to be caſt into that *everlaſting fire*, which *God hath prepared for them, as well as for the Devil and his Angels* ? which is the moſt dreadful condition of all : that judgdment cannot be accounted ſmall which is eternal. An *eternal* Feaver, or but an *eternal* tooth-ache, were a miſery unſpeakable : But what are theſe to the *lying in that lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone to all eternity* ? Oh me-thinks, the name of *eternal judgement* ſhould, if not fright him out of his wits, yet awaken every unregenerate man out of his ſecurity ; and ſtir him up without further delay to abandon his wicked and ungodly courſe of life, and to ſet upon the practice of all holy and religious duties, and to labour therein, to get the work of Regeneration wrought in his heart, that he may become a new creature. It may be thou haſt a plentiful portion of this Worlds goods, enjoying what thine heart can wiſh or deſire ; but Oh what will it profit thee to live plentifully and proſperouſly here, and to be *eternally* miſerable hereafter ? Thy former happineſs will ſerve only to make thee more ſenſible of future miſeries. And therefore when thou art tempted to any unlawfull pleaſure, or profit, reaſon thus with thy ſelf, *Shall I for a ſhort momentary pleaſure, that will ſoon have an end, run the hazard of an eternal judgement, that will never have an end ? ſhall I for a little profit here, loſe my ſoul to all Eternity ? What greater folly, yea what greater madneſs can be imagined* ?

Thus much of the miſeries of the Unregenerate in this life : Come we now to ſhew their miſeries at death.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Sheweth the miserable and dreadfull condition of the Unregenerate at their death.

IF the *life* of an unregenerate man be so miserable, as hath been shewed, How dolefull think you, will be his *death?* surely his misery then will be much increased, As will appear from the consideration of these particulars.

1. When death shall appear unto thee, and tell thee, it hath a message from the Lord, who hath sent an *habeas corpus* for thy body: Then comes in *Conscience*, if a little awakened with her books of accounts, her black and bitter roul, and shews thee thy old reckonings and arrears, setting before thee the follies of thy youth, the sins of thy riper years, and the iniquities of thy whole life.

Ah sinner, thou who goest on impenitently in thy wicked and ungodly course of life, consider with what a ghastly countenance thou wilt look upon that black and hellish Catalogue of all thy sins: thy lyes and oaths, thy railing and rotten speeches, thy scoffings at Gods people, thy goods ill gotten, thy time ill spent, thy profanation of Sabbaths, thy speculative wantonness, yea thy many actual filthinesses, and uncleannesses, thy pride, worldliness, and covetousness, thy sensual revellings, and jovial meetings. What horrour will then possess thy soul, no heart of man can conceive, nor tongue of man and angels can express. Indeed many there are, who on their death-beds have little sight or sense of their sins, neither do they think of *judgement*, or *eternity*, but drop into hell before they consider any thing. But yet upon the approach of death, commonly there is some terrour and trembling upon the consciences of carnal men: and if ever any sin did formerly sting, it will then especially. Oh, me-thinks a serious apprehension, and sensible forethought of these things, even at hand, for ought any man

knows, ſhould make the hardeſt heart to tremble, and melt into tears of unfained ſorrow.

II. *The Devil will not be then wanting to aggravae thy ſins, and to ſet before thee the curſes and the judgements due unto thee for the ſame, thereby to drive thee to deſpair,* For when death layeth ſiege to thebody, then doth he moſt violently aſſault the ſoul, And the ſhorter he perceiveth his time to be, the more eagerly doth he beſtir himſelf.

III. *Death puts an end to all thy Worldly comforts, and contentments, which muſt all die with thee, as to thy uſe and comfort* ; It ſalutes thee with this ſad word, *Thou haſt received thy good things* now an end of thy Heaven and joy. Particularly.

1. *Then thou muſt part with all thy carnal pleaſures and delights, which thou haſt loved ſo dearly.* Yea then thou wilt find little comfort remaining of all thy former pleaſures, wherein thou tookeſt ſo much content and delight: and for the enjoyment whereof thou diſpenſedſt not onely with the duties of thy calling, but likewiſe with the duties of piety. Yea it will be a very hell unto thee upon earth to conſider what *eternal* torments thou art like to endure, for thoſe *poor and periſhing* pleaſures which thou enjoyedſt here for a *ſeaſon.* Are theſe the things for which I dye? Are the e the price of my ſoul, of my blood, of my peace?

2. Thou muſt part with thy *neareſt and deareſt relations* ; Death will ſeparate thee from them all. And how will it torment thee to remember to how little good purpoſe you lived together!

3. Thou muſt part with thy *wealth and riches,* carrying nothing away with thee of all thy enjoyments, yea it will be *a death to thee* to part with thy wealth, which was thy life ; but to conſider how thou haſt damned thy ſoul for the getting thereof ; this will be *an hell to thee.*

4. Thou muſt part with all the *means and opportunities of grace,* Now thou enjoyeſt the ordinances of Chriſt, as the Word, Prayer, and Sacraments, which whileſt thou enjoyedſt thou hadſt hope: But death puts an end to theſe, and thy hopes muſt give up their Ghoſt. Now Chriſt calls upon thee, Sabbath after Sabbath, by his Miniſters and

and Ambassadours, woing and beseeching thee to abandon thy lusts, to cast away thy sins, and to cast thy self into his arms, to accept of the reconciliation purchased by his blood. But ere long thou shalt hear no more of these things, not a Sabbath more, not a Sermon more, not one word more of grace, of mercy, of hope for ever. When thou wouldst give, if thou hadst them, ten thousand Worlds, for one moment of that merciful time of grace, which thou hast so long abused; for a drop of that precious blood, which thou hast so long trampled under thy feet: yea, for one Sabbath more, to have Christ once more tendred to thee in the Ministry of the Gospel; but alas it will not be granted.

Ah sinner! Then wilt thou cry out of thy sins and cry for mercy: mercy, mercy Lord to a dying soul, that am just sinking, perishing under the load of mine iniquities. Then wilt thou begin to wish, when it is too late, that thou hadst spent thy precious time to better purpose; that thou hadst minded more the things of Eternity: that thou hadst closed with the tenders and offers of Jesus Christ, and that thou hadst better improved the means and opportunities of grace, which thou didst once enjoy.

Thou wilt then say, *Oh if the Lord would be pleased to adde a few years more to my life! How would I contemn the World and the vanities thereof? How exactly would I order my conversation? How careful would I be of duty? How watchfull against sin? How would I bestir my self to work out mine own salvation?* But the time of thy departure is at hand, and there is no hope of a reprieve for one day longer; and therefore all these good wishes and purposes come too late.

There are two things especially which will aggravate a sinners misery at his death.

1. To think what possibility of making his peace with God he hath had all his life time; to remember how often he hath been invited to accept of Jesus Christ, and yet would not.

2. To think that now there is no hope of mercy having by his sins shut Heaven-gate, and hardened Gods heart against him. Surely then wilt thou in the bitterness of thy soul cry out, and say, *The God of mercy hath utterly*

forsaken me; and the Devil, who knows no mercy, waites for to take me. Ah! then which way soever thou lookest, thou wilt find nothing but matter of bitter weeping and lamentation. If thou look *backward*, what canst thou behold but all the filthy and abominable lusts of thy youth unrepented of? yea multitudes of horrid sins which thou hast committted in the whole course of thy life; for which thou never hast been humbled, nor shed one penitential tear: the guilt of the least of them is enough to sink thee body and soul into everlasting burnings.

If thou look *forward*, what canst thou behold but sudden destruction ready to seize upon thee? Yea Gods strict Tribunal, before which thou art just making thy appearance, there immediately to be sentenced to endless torments and miseries of the other world; the sting and terrours of which thou shalt never be able either to avoid, or abide.

If thou look *within thee*, what canst thou behold, but thy conscience polluted and defiled, yea accusing and condemning thee? If *without thee*, what canst thou behold, but the wicked World which thou hast too much loved? and thy relations which stand weeping about thee? a company of miserable comforters, that cannot delay the separating stroke of death one day or hour: neither can they afford thee the least dram of true comfort.

If thou look *downward*, what canst thou behold, but hell deserved? with her mouth open ready to swallow thee up quick; and the Devils ready to receive thy soul, and carry it to that dungeon of darkness. If *upward*, what canst thou behold but a provoked, enraged God? *whom because thou refusedst to hear in the day of his merciful visitation, he will now laugh at thy calamity, and mock when thy fear cometh upon thee*, as himself threatneth, *Prov.* 1. 24, 26. and in *verse* 28. saith the Lord, *Then shalt thou call upon me, but I will not answer, thou shalt seek me, but thou shalt not find me, for that thou hatedst knowledge, and didst not choose the fear of the Lord.* And verse 30. *Thou wouldst none of my counsell, but despisedst all my reproofs. Therefore shalt thou eat the fruit of thine own way, and be filled with thine own desires*; that is, the wickedness which thou hast sown, shalt thou reap with all fullness. Thus

thou

thou wilt look every where for help, yet findeſt thy ſelf every way helpleſs, and hopeleſs.

Haply thou wilt then look unto Jeſus Chriſt, in hope that he will appear for thee, and his blood make thy Attonement: But ſinner know, that though his blood be *a fountain opened* to all poorpenitent believers, to waſh away the filthy ſpots and ſtains of their ſins; Yet to thee, who haſt all thy life long ſuffered Chriſt to ſtand knocking at the door of thine heart, by the Miniſtery of his word, by the motions of his Spirit, and by the checks of thine own conſcience, and wouldſt not open unto him: to thee his blood will be then *a fountain ſealed*; ſo that thou ſhalt not partake of the leaſt benefit thereof, becauſe in thy life time thou haſt ſo often ſlighted it, yea and crucified him afreſh by thy bloody ſins.

Ah ſinner, whither wilt thou flee for comfort in the midſt of thy diſtreſs? It will then be too late to cry out, Oh that the time I have ſpent in Taverns and Ale-houſes, in ſports and paſtimes, in carnal pleaſures and ſenſual delighrs, I had ſpent in Prayer and faſting, in humbling and repenting! It will then be too late to cry with *Balaam, Oh that I might dye the death of the righteous*, when thou haſt neglected to live the life of the righteous. For look as the life is, ſo commonly is the death; and as death leaves a man, ſo the laſt judgement ſhall find him.

And now, ſinner, thy laſt ſand being run out, thy day paſt, and the Devils long looked for day being come, who waits for thy ſoul, ſo ſoon as it goeth out of thy body. Oh what a direfull ſcreech will thy ſoul give when it paſſeth out of thy body into the Devils clutches, to be carryed by him into the bottomleſs burning lake!

Oh how ſhould the conſideration of theſe unſpeakable miſeries, which are the portion of natural and unregenerate men at their deaths, ſtartle and waken all ſuch worldings and ſenſualiſts, who ſay they may encreaſe their wealth, and ſatiate themſelves with worldly pleaſures and delights, take no thought now, nor make any proviſion againſt this dreadfull day of reckoning, I mean, the day of their deaths. Surely did they know and feelingly apprehend, or would they be brought to believe what horrour and aſtoniſhment, what terrour and

anguiſh is like then to ſeize upon them; they would count it the greateſt point of wiſdom in the World ſpeedily to labour for an intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, who alone can free them, as from the ſting of death, ſo from theſe horrours and aſtoniſhments which acompany the ſame; and would now ply all the bleſſed means of ſalvation; as *reading, hearing, praying, faſting*, and the like; which are now their burden and bondage, yea the matter of their mocks and ſcorns, would then be their daily delight and exerſe.

CHAP. IX.

Sheweth the miſerable and dreadful condition of the Unregenerate after their deaths

IF this were the concluſion of Unregenerate men, that death did put an end to all their miſeries, happy were it for many. But this is their grief and ſorrow, their woe and miſery, that all this is the beginnig of their ſorrows: that after all this, there is a reckoning to be made for what is paſt. For *as it is appointed to men once to dye, ſo after this cometh the judgement* Heb. 9.23. Where by the *judgement* that immediately followeth *after death*, the Apoſtle meaneth *the particular judgement*, which is at the end of each mans life, as is evident by this phraſe, *after this*, which intendeth the time of a mans death. For as there is *a general judgement* at the end of the world; So there is *a particular judgement* that paſſeth upon each man at the end of this life. So ſoon as thy breath departeth out of thy body; it fareth with thy ſoul, as with that man of whom the Propher *Amos* ſpeaketh, Amos 5. 19. *who did flee from a Lion, and a Bear met him.* In like maneer thy ſoul is no ſooner eſcaped out of a miſerable World, but in a moment it is plunged into another and greater miſery.

Herein lyeth a main differenee between the Children of God, and the wicked. The courſe which God taketh with his Children, is this. When the ſoul is ſet at liberty from

from the priſon of the body, it is inſtantly conveighed by the Angels into *Abrahams boſome*, as is expreſly noted of *Lazarus*. And *being cloathed with the long white robe of Chriſts Righteouſneſs, is joyned to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.*

But with the ſouls of wicked and impenitent ſinners, it is far otherwiſe; for ſo ſoon as they depart out of their bodies, they are ſeized upon by wicked Angels, and preſently brought before Gods Tribunal ſeat, where receiving their doom, they are inſtantly ſent down into the Kingdom of darkneſs, and bottom of the burning lake, there to be reſerved in everlaſting chains unto the judgement of the great day.

II. Beſides this *particular judgement* on the ſouls of the unregenerate at their deaths; there will be *a general judgement* on their ſouls and bodies re-united at the great and laſt day.

For the fuller clearing and opening of this great and fundamental principle of Religon, I will ſhew you;

1. *That there will be a day of Judgement.*
2. *The Perſon who ſhall be the Judge.*
3. *The order of Chriſts proceeding in judgement.*

I. For the firſt, *that there will be a day of Judgement*, is clear from that of the Author to the *Hebrews*, *Chap.* 9. 2. where he reckoneth it amongſt the fundamental principles of Religion. And *Act.* 17. 31. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaking of God, ſaith, *He hath appointed a day in which he will Judge the World in righteouſneſs.* Yea, in 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. he puts a MUST upon it, *We muſt*, ſaith he, *all appear before the judgemeut-ſeat of Chriſt*, which implieth the neceſſity thereof.

And truly there is a neceſſity of a *general Judgement*; as for the declaration of the equity of Gods *particular Judgement* on each man at his death; in which reſpect it is called *the day of the revelation of the Righteous Judgement of God*, Rom. 2. 5. So for a clear manifeſtation of the juſtice of God. Though *God be moſt juſt in all his ways*, yet in this World it is not ſo evidently diſcerned. Becauſe God in Wiſdom oft ſuffereth the wicked to proſper; yea and to domineer over the Righteous. Here the beſt men

men are oftimes the worſt uſed, and moſt wronged. Here the *true Prophets* of God are fedwith bread and water in their Caves; whileſt the falſe Prophets of *Baal* fared plentifully at *Jezabels* Table. Here *Divës* ſits in his Palace, *cloathed richly, faring ſumptuouſly every day*; whileſt *Lazarus lyeth at his gate, naked and hungry*. But then *God will render to every one according to his deeds*, Rom. 2. 6. Thus you ſee, there will be a day of Judgement.

Oh how terrible will this day of Judgement be unto the unregenerate, and wicked? To them it will be *a day of wrath, a day of trouble and diſtreſs; a day of darkneſs and gloomineſs*; Then ſhall the *drunkard* drink deepeſt of the cup of Gods wrath; the *fornicator and adulterer*, who burned with the fire of luſt, burn in the fire of Hell. Then ſhall the *worlding and covetous wretch* feel his loads of ill-gotten goods ſinking and drowning him in perdition and deſtruction, preſſing him down to the bottom of the infernal lake.

Ah ſinner! How doth it concern thee to retire into ſome ſecret place, and there ſeriouſly to ponder on this day of judgement? Ask thine heart this queſtion, Is it certain there will be a day of judgement, or no? If it be certain; Oh then why do I not prepare for it by breaking off my ſins, and making my peace with God, before that day come upon me? why do I not labour for an intereſt in Chriſt, by whom alone I can be freed from eternal death and condemnation? why do I not now *give all diligence to make my Calling and Election ſure*? Oh ſinner, reaſon thus with thy ſelf; thou knoweſt not of what advantage a few ſuch ſerious thoughts may be to thy ſoul.

When *Paul* Preached to the *Athenians*, he urged them to repent and turn from their ſins, from this very ground and reaſon, Becauſe the *Lord had appointed a day in which he will judge the World in righteouſneſs*. Act. 17. 30, 31. *Oh repent therefore, and turn ye from your wicked wayes, for why will ye dye and periſh eternally in your ſins? Seek unto the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is nigh*. Chriſt now ſtands knocking at the door of thine heart by the Miniſters of his Word, the motions of his Spirit

Spirit, and checks of thine own Conſcience. Oh give him ſpeedy and willing entertainment. The time will come when thou wilt knock with the *fooliſh Virgins*, and ſhalt not be heard: and repent with *Judas*, and not be accepted. For the Lord will have his day when thine is paſt, and *a day of judgement* for thy puniſhment, that didſt ſlight and reject *the day of mercy* for thine amendment.

II, From the *Perſon* who ſhall be the *Judge*, It is *Chriſt that ſhall be Judge*: who ſhall in a viſible ſhape both judge and pronounce ſentence upon all men, as the ſentence of *abſolution* on the Elect, ſo the ſentence of *Condemnation* on the Wicked.

Indeed judging the World, being a work *ab extra*, which reſpects the creatures, it is common to the whole Trinity; So that neither the *Father* nor the *Holy Ghoſt* are excluded: but yet it is in Scripture more eſpecially appropriated to the Son. And that partly as a recompence of his humiliation; and partly becauſe the proceedings of the judgement being viſible, it ſeemed convenient, that the *Judge himſelf* ſhould be conſpicuous. And therefore Chriſt in his humane nature ſhall judge the World, and denounce the doom of condemnation againſt the wicked ones: yet ſhall he do all as *Immanuel*, God and Man.

Oh, how terrible will the ſight of Jeſus Chriſt, *as Judge*, be unto all carnal and impenitent Wretches, who, when they ſhall ſee *him* ſitting upon the Throne, whoſe gracious invitations they have ſlighted; whoſe Miniſters and Ambaſſadors they have wronged and contemned; whoſe ordinances they have neglected, and whom they have often crucified by their ſins: How then will their hearts be apalled with dread and terrour; entreating *the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of him that ſitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*, Rev. 6. 16.

A poor Believer on that day ſeeing Chriſt ſitting upon the Throne, may with comfort ſay, *Lo yonder is he who died to ſave me, who ſhed his blood for my redemption, and roſe again for my juſtification, and is now come to judge both the quick and the dead.*

But

But thou who dyeſt in thy ſins, canſt not but with much anguiſh of Spirit in that day cry out and ſay, *Loe, yonder is he who came from Heaven to ſave poor loſt ſinners, and who did Sabbath after Sabbath, even all my life long, by his Miniſters, woe and beſeech me to abandon my luſts, and to receive him as my lord and Saviour, to yield ſubjection unto him, and his laws, and to reſt upon him alone for life and ſalvation: who now would have received me into eternal bliſs and happineſs. But I miſerable wretch that I was, did ſlight his woings, and beſeechings, turning a deaf ear to the calls of his grace, and preferred my luſts and corruptions before the Lord, and his ſalvation: he is the Judge who now ſits on life and death, and from whom I muſt now receive my ſentence.*

III. *For the order of Chriſts proceeding in Judgement at the laſt day.*

I. There will be a *Citation* of all both dead and living men with the Devils, to come to Judgement. *We muſt all appear*, ſaith the Apoſtle. 2 Cor. 5. 10. *All* without exception of any muſt make their appearance, high and low, rich and poor, King and beggar, male and female.

Oh what a great day will that be when the whole world ſhall be cited and ſummoned to appear together at once!

Q. If you ask how they ſhall be ſummoned?

A. By a ſhout from Heaven, and the ſound of a Trumpet, which ſhall alarm this ſleeping earth, and at which Hell ſhall ſhake, all graves ſhall open, and yield up their priſoners, which they have faſt kept in the chains of death, from all ages ſince the beginning of the World. Yea *the Sea ſhall give up her dead which are in it.* Rev. 20. 13.

A dreadful ſummons it will be unto all the wicked and ungodly, whom this ſudden noiſe will no leſs aſtoniſh, than confound. We read, that when the Lord deſcended upon *Mount Sinai*, for the delivery of the Law, with the ſound of a Trumpet, *the people of Iſrael quaked and trembled.* Exod. 19. 16. Oh then how will the wicked and ungodly quake and tremble when the Lord Chriſt ſhall deſcend from Heaven with the ſound of

of a Trumpet to puniſh the tranſgreſſours of that Law?

II. *Upon this Citation and Summons there will be a Reſurrection from the dead, and ſuch a change of the living, as if they had been a long time dead, and were raiſed to life again.* And as the graves ſhall then give up their dead bodies; ſo hell ſhall give up her living Souls, which ſhall enter into their old Carcaſes to receive a greater condemnation,. Oh, what woful ſalutations will there be between that body and ſoul, which living together in the hight of iniquity, muſt now be re-united to ſuffer the fulneſs of their miſery?

III. *After the Reſurrection follows a Collection, and gathering together of all men and Devils in the World*; but with this difference. The Elect being gathered together by Angels, ſhall with great joy be caught up into the Air to meet the Lord, *Mat.* 24. 31. But the reprobate together with the Devils and his Angels ſhall with extream horror and confuſion be drawn and dragg'd into his preſence, *Rev.* 6. 15, 16. Ah ſinner, what terror and amazement will then ſeize upon thee, when like a Malefactor thou art brought againſt thy will before the judgement Seat of Chriſt?

IV. *After this follows a ſeparation of the good from the bad, of the Elect from the Reprobate,* For Chriſt at the firſt appearing of all before his judgement Seat, to teſtifie his gracious favour, and good reſpect to Believers, ſeparates them from others, and ſets them on his right hand, as a flock of ſheep whom he intends to take for his own. And then will he ſet the Wicked and Unbelievers on his left hand, to teſtifie as his rejecting them, ſo his purpoſe to paſs a terrible doom upon them, as himſelf expreſſeth, *Mat.* 25. 32, 33. So that at the day of judgement there will be a ſeparation of the neareſt and deareſt relations that may be: as between Husband and Wife, yea Father and Child. Oh, what a ſad ſeparation will that be? when the Husband ſhall be ſeparated from the Wife and the Wife from the Husband: the Father from the Child, and the Child from the Father.

V. *After this follows conviction of the Wicked, and a diſcovery of all their works*; Which is proper to go before giving of ſentence. For in all Courts of Juſtice, there is

no

no man condemned till he be convicted. And therefore this Court of Christ being the exacteſt Court for equity and juſtice, we may well conclude, that there will be no man condemned, till he be convicted, and his offences laid open before all.

All the wickedneſſes of their lives ſhall be brought forth to light, and made to ſtare them in the face: and with ſuch unqueſtionable evidence charged upon them, that they ſhall ſtand ſpeechleſs before their Judge, not having a word to ſay to excuſe and acquit themſelves of this dreadful Charge.

Touching the *means of conviction*, know that this conviction will be by the opening of two books, which we find mentioned in Scripture.

1. *The Book of Gods Remembrance.*
2. *The Book of every mans Conſcience,*

The former we find mentioned, Mal. 3. 16. *A book of Remembrance was written before God.* God hath a *Book of Remembrance*, as of the good works and actions of the Godly, ſo of the evil works and actions of the wicked, wherein their moſt ſecret abominations are regiſtred and recorded. Sinner, all the wickedneſſes of thy life, the ſecret villanies that thine heart hath been privy to, which no eye of man ever ſaw, or ſuſpected, all thy Chamber ſins, all thy twylight ſins, all thy works of the night, and of darkneſs, yea ſecret and open, which thou haſt long ſince forgotten and buried out of thy ſight; all theſe are written and booked up before the Lord againſt that terrible day,

The latter Book namely the *Book of Conſcience*, we find mentioned, Jer. 17. 1. *The Sin of* Judah *is written with a pen of Iron, and with the point of a diamond, it is graven upon the Tables of their hearts.* That is, their ſins are ſo fixed in their hearts and conſciences that they cannot be forgotten, but the memory of them all ſhall be revived. And with the Apoſtle, *Their Conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and accuſing them in the day, when God ſhall judge the ſecrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. 2. 15 In this book of Conſcience, which God hath given to every man and woman, are written all their thoughts, words, and actions; yea their ſinful omiſſions, as well as their ſinful com-

commiſſions ; their ſecret impurities, as well as their open impieties.

Now many mens conſciences are, as it were, aſleep, ſo that though they are guilty of manifold ſins and tranſgreſſions, yet their conſciences do not accuſe them for the ſame : but their iniquity is ſtill marked, and at that day every mans conſcience ſhall be awakened, bring forth its black roule, even all his ſins, and ſo ſhall be as a thouſand witneſſes againſt him. Then the *Covetous Shop-keeper* ſhall remember all his deceits in trading, his falſe weights and meaſures, his lying and diſſembling. Then ſhall the *unclean perſon* remember all his watchings for the twilight, all his ſpeculative wantonneſſes, and contemplative, as well as practical, uncleanneſſes. Yea then ſhall every one read in this book the hell of his nature, as well as the hideous abominations of this life : then ſhall he ſee all his former ſins, which he had forgotten, to be written in his conſcience, with indelible characters, never to be blotted out. That work of accuſing, which the conſcience here doth in ſome men imperfectly, it will at that day do moſt perfectly.

Ah, in what a woful caſe will thy heart then be ? what horrour and aſtoniſhment will then poſſeſs thy ſoul ? when all thy lies and oaths, all thy raylings and rotten ſpeeches, all thy filthy and unclean thoughts, thy miſpent time in Taverns and Ale-houſes, thy worldineſs and covetouſneſs, the vanities and rebellions of thy whole life, ſhall be brought to thy remembrance, and at once charged upon thy graceleſs ſoul.

2. *Yea at the day of Judgement there will be a diſcovery of thy ſins to all the World.* For as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, 1 Cor. 4. 5. *Hidden things ſhall on that day be brought to light.* They ſhall not only be called to remembrance by the ſinner himſelf, but likewiſe expoſed to the view and cenſure of others. There is no ſin ſo ſecretly and cloſely commited, but then ſhall be diſcovered to the view of all. There is ſcarce a wicked man in the World, though never ſo formal, but he hath at ſome time or other committed ſome ſuch ſin in ſecret, which he would not have others to know for all the World. But know for certain, that at the day of judgement, all the World

ſhall hear thereof. For then all thy ſecret ſins, and cloſe villanies ſhall be diſcovered, and layed open before Angels, Men and Devils; thy ſecret Whoredoms and cloſe Adulteries, thy Pilfrings and ſtealings, thy falſe Weights and Meaſures, thy Hypocriſies and Diſſemblings ſhall be diſcovered to the view of all, and that to thine eternal ſhame and confuſion. And therefore the day of Judgement is called *the day of revelation*, Rom. 2. 5. when many Murthers, Thefts, Adulteries, and other abominations, which come not to light here, ſhall at that day be made known, and diſcovered to the view of all. Yea then not only thy words and actions, but alſo thy ſecret thoughts and imaginations, how vain and wanton, how filthy and abominable ſoever they have been; ſhall appear to the view of all. Never therefore adventure upon the commiting of any ſin in hope of ſecreſie, becauſe thou ſeemeſt ſafe from the eyes of men. For ſuppoſe thy ſin lyeth undiſcovered unto the laſt and great day: yet then ſhall it out with a witneſs, and be made manifeſt to the view of all.

Now I know no better way to prevent the diſcovery of your ſins at that great day, than here in this time and day of grace to call your ſelves to an account, to ſearch and examine your own hearts and lives, and then to judge and condemn your ſelves for your manifold ſins and tranſgreſſions? for as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, 1 Cor. 11, 31. *If we judge our ſelves, we ſhall not be condemned of the Lord.* Oh therefore let us here often keep a day of judgement in our own ſouls and conſciences, by a ſerious examining of our ſelves concerning our ſins, and judging and condemning our ſelves for the ſame: and then let us in all humility proſtrate our ſelves at the Throne of grace, pleading the mercy of God and merits of Chriſt for the pardon and forgiveneſs of them all; giving no reſt to our ſouls, till we have ſome comfortable evidence and aſſurance thereof, which will cauſe us to lift up our heads with joy at the great day of account.

VI. *After conviction and manifeſtation of all their ſinfull actions, follows the ſentence of condemnation*; and what it is, our Saviour himſelf hath ſhewed, Matth. 25. 41.

Depart

Depart from me ye curſed int o everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. Oh dreadful ſentence! every word whereof carryeth much terrour in it, and breatheth nothing but woe and miſery, yea fire and brimſtone.

Depart from me] that is, from *Jeſus Chriſt*, the fountain of bliſs and happineſs. This the wicked make light of at preſent: for taking more delight in their ſinful luſts and pleaſures then in Chriſts preſence, they are willing to depart from him. Whereas in truth it is a moſt grievous miſery; *for, in his preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore.* So to be caſt out of his preſence, is to be caſt away from the fountain of all joy and pleaſure, yea from glory and Salvation: for if from Chriſt, then from all that is his, even his glory and ſalvation.

Ye curſed.] To depart from Chriſt were hell enough, but thou muſt alſo go with a curſe, even a curſe that comprehends all woes and miſeries under it. And truly to be under Gods curſe is the quinteſſence of miſery.

Into everlaſting fire.] What! into fire, and into everlaſting fire? Ah wretches! curſed indeed. For as the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaketh, Iſa. 33. 14. *who can dwell with devouring fire? who can dwell with everlaſting burnings?* which ſhall not be quenched night nor day, but fed continually with Rivers of brimſtone, and kept ſtill in flame and fierceneſs by the unquencheable wrath of the juſt God to all Eternity. The torment of the wicked in hell will be, as without any intermiſſion, ſo without any end. After they have there been tormented hundreds, thouſands, millions of dayes, years and ages, their torments will be as far from ending, as if they were then beginning. And is not this miſery enough? to lye in fire? *in everlaſting burnings*? this is even beyond the expreſſion of men or Angels. If a man knew he muſt lye in a flaming fire but one day or hour, Oh what fear and horror would poſſeſs his ſoul? But what is a day, or an hour, or an age, to eternity? Oh then what ſtupidity and ſenſeleſneſs hath poſſeſſed the hearts of ſinful men, who by all this are not frighted from their ſins? The fear of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s fiery Furnace made men do any thing to avoid it. And ſhall not the fear of *everlaſting fire in hell*, make men do any thing to eſcape it?

this methinks ſhould awaken them, and cauſe them not only to humble themſelves for their ſins, and to beg the pardon of them: but alſo to caſt away their tranſgreſſions, to ſtrive againſt them, watch againſt them, pray againſt them, begging power and ſtrength from Chriſt, to keep down the power of their luſts that hurry them on in their ſinful wayes. It is one of the wonders of the world, how men, who do believe the word of Chriſt to be true, that *the wicked ſhall go into everlaſting fire*, can wittingly and wilfully adventure upon ſinful wayes, the end whereof they know will be ſo dreadful and aſtoniſhing.

Prepared for the Devil and his Angels] That is you ſhall not only be caſt into a lake of fire and brimſtone, but you ſhall there dwell with thoſe helliſh Fiends the Devil and his Angels, who will be continually inſulting over you with helliſh exprobrations for neglecting ſo great ſalvation offered unto you time after time; and being ſo fooliſh as to loſe the joyes and pleaſures of Heaven, which laſt to all Eternity, for the enjoyment of ſome baſe luſt, which laſted but for a ſeaſon.

We read in the Goſpel of a Woman who came unto Chriſt and ſaid unto him, *Have mercy on me, O Lord, for my daughter is grievouſly vexed with a Devil.* Now if it were ſuch a grievous miſery to be vexed *with one Devil?* what is it to be vexed and tormented *with all the Legions of Devils in Hell?*

Oh what terrour and trembling, what horrour and amazement will ſeize on their ſouls that have received this dreadful ſentence of condemnation. How will they then run like men diſtracted to the Mountains and Hills for covert and ſhelter? How will they then beg and yell again for mercy to a judge that is juſtly inexorable? I ſay, juſtly inexorable to them, haveing ſcornfully rejected his many loving invitations, and earneſt beſeechings by his Miniſters, to accept of that peace and reconciliation which he hath purchaſed by his blood. Oh that men would conſider, that one tear or ſigh of a penitent heart will now more prevail for attainment of mercy, than all their bitter and importunate yellings in that day of Gods wrath!

VII. *After*

VII. *After the promulgation of the ſentence, followeth the execution, and ſending of the perſons judged to their everlaſting eſtate?* as it is written, Mat. 25 46. *And theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment.* So that now comes the eternal ſeparation from Chriſt, and poſſeſſion of thoſe torments, which are eaſeleſs and endleſs. For then ſhall they be hurried by the *Devils* as their *Jaylors* out of Chriſts preſence, and dragged into the bottomleſs lake of outer-darkneſs, that perpetually burneth with fire and brimſtone. Oh the helliſh cryes and horrid ſhrieks that then will be heard! no heart can conceive or imagine what an hideous cry it will be. When the inhabitants of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* felt the fire and brimſtone falling from Heaven upon their heads. And when the earth opened her mouth to ſwallow up *Corah* and his company, and they ſaw themſelves going down quick into the pit: Oh the cryes which were then heard? Oh the ſhrieks which then filled the air? But alas what were theſe to the outcryes which will be made? and to the ſcrieches which will be heard? when the Devils and reprobate men and women ſhall be violenty driven into Hell, never, never to return again.

Hadſt thou now an heart to turn from thy ſins unto God by true and unfeigned repentance, and to pray unto him for mercy in and through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt, there were hope of mercy. But at the day of judgement thy repentance and thy prayers will nothing avail: The judge will not then be intreated by thee; and no marvel ſeeing thou wouldſt not hearken to him in the day of his merciful viſitation. But though he ſent unto thee meſſenger after Meſſenger, Ambaſſadour after Ambaſſadour to woe and beſeech thee to abandon thy ſins, and to accept of him for thy Lord and Saviour; yet wouldeſt thou not leave one beloved ſin, nor deny one fleſhly luſt for all his intreaties. And therefore on that day will he not be intreated by thee, notwithſtanding thy manifold cryes and prayers. If thou wilt not believe me, hear Chriſts own words to this purpoſe, Prov. 1. 24, &c. *Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproof: I will alſo laugh*

at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you: then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer : they shall *seek me early, but they shall not find me.*

Oh! how will it then wound thy very soul to remember thy folly in neglecting thy season, and refusing so great salvation? How will it make thee with anguish of heart to cry out, *Ah silly wretch, where was thine understanding, to sleight such gracious invitations? to prefer every base lust before the Lord of life? to turn aside from him that spake unto thee from Heaven, and to turn after thy companions, and the pleasures of this earth? to put off the turning from thy sins, and making thy peace with God till it was too late? Oh now would I give a World, if I had it, for one offer of Christ more, for one Sabbath more to make my peace with God, and to make sure of Christ, but alas, it is now too late.*

Oh the folly and madness of all wicked men who go on securely and impenitently in their sins, till they drop into hell-fire! Is this thy Wisdom to sin *a while*, and burn *for ever*? to laugh a while, and howle for ever? for a little momentary pleasure here, to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire?

Ah sinner, that thou wouldst now forethink of this dreadful time, and woful misery, which hangs over thine head! that when thou art alone, thou wouldst seriously consider with thy self, as the certainty and dreadfulness of this day, so what thy condition is like to be! that thou mightest thereby be stirred up to make out after Christ, by whom thou maist escape the wrath to come. Now whilest Christ is Preached to thee in the Ministry of the Gospel, mercy and salvation is offered, and now if ever is the time to accept it. Oh therefore that now, even now in this thy time and day of grace, thou wouldst know the things that belong to thy peace? that thou wouldst now resolve for Christ, resolve for holiness: and henceforth bid adieu to all thy vain and sensual wayes which are hastily carrying thee down to that place of darkness, from whence there is no redemption.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Shewing the miſerable and dreadful condition of the Unregenerate after the day of Judgement.

HAving ſhewed you the miſerable eſtate of the unregenerate at theday of Judgement. I ſhall proceed to ſhew you, *their dreadful eſtate after the day of Judgement:* Which in general is *moſt curſed*, and therefore ſaith our Saviour unto them, Mat.25.41.

Depart from me ye curſed. That curſed eſtate is manifeſt,

1. *By privation of all felicity.*
2. *By ſubjection to all miſery.*
3. *By ſundry reſemblances.*
4. *By the perpetuity thereof.*

Of theſe in their order,

I. The miſdrable and curſed eſtate of the unregenerate conſiſts in *their privation of all that happineſs which believers do enjoy in the preſence of God, in whoſe preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.* Were there no *poſitive* ſenſible miſery, this *privation* of Gods preſence were enough, (if they underſtood it) to make the damneds future eſtate moſt accurſed, to make Hell to be Hell without any other fire. For as fulneſs of joy and pleaſure is had by the enjoying of Gods preſence; ſo fulneſs of grief and ſorrow doth poſſeſs the hearts of all thoſe who are deprived thereof. Couldſt thou but for one moment be wrapt up into Heaven, and ſee a glimpſe of that infinite glory which God hath prepared for all that love and fear him, thou wouldſt ſoon acknowledge as much.

II. Beſides this *privation of felicity* there is a *ſubjection to all miſery.* Beſides *the pain of loſs*, there is a *pain of ſence*, which the damned endure: which is in it ſelf intolerable, unutterable, and unconceivable. It where miſery enough to be tormented with the *gout*, *collick*, *ſtone*, *tooth-ache*, or the like: but ſhould all theſe, together with the moſt exquiſite

tortures that the wit of man could invent, meet together in one man, at one inſtant, yet would they come infinitely ſhort of theſe. All pains and torments, all racks and tortures whatſoever, which men are capable of ſuffering here, are but *ſparks* in compariſon of the *flames of Gods wrath* : and *flea-bits* to the *ſtings and ſcorpions beneath*, where there is torment without eaſe, ſorrow without ſolace, darkneſs without light, horrour without comfort, juſtice without mercy, wrath without pity, miſery without eaſe. *There are no ſorrows like to the ſorrows of the damned, wherewith the Lord afflicteth them in the day of his fierce wrath* ; when he will pour out all the Vials of his fury upon them, and will make them at once to pay for all the wrongs they have done to his name, for the contempt of his mercy, their affronts to his juſtice, for the abuſe of his patience and long-ſuffering, for their miſpent time, for their ſwearing and curſing, for their whoring and drinking, for their prophaning his Sabbaths, for their hating and perſecuting his people.

Oh ! What weeping and wailing ? what ſighing and groaning ? what curſing and banning will there then be heard ?

The extremity of the torments of hell further appeareth in this, *that they are univerſal.* Not only this or that part of thy body ſhall be tortured and tormented, but every part and member thereof. As all have joyned in ſin, ſo muſt they all partake of the torment.

Thy wanton *eyes* which were wont to pleaſe themſelves in beholding beautiful objects, ſhall then ſee nothing but what is dreadful and terrible. If thou look *above thee*, what canſt thou behold but an angry Judge, and Saints and Angels, whoſe bright beauty will make thy deformity more ugly and loathſome ? If thou look *beneath thee*, what canſt thou behold but the bottomleſs pit into which thou art fallen, and ſtill falling lower ? If thou look *round about thee*, what canſt thou behold, but Devils and helliſh furies, vexing and tormenting thee ? Thine *ears* which took great delight in pleaſant ſongs and melodious ſounds, ſhall then hear nothing but curſing and banning, howling and blaſpheming. Thy *noſtrils* which were wont to be filled with ſweet perfumes, ſhall then be filled with

with the noyſome ſtench of fire and brimſtone. Thy *throat* which was much delighted with ſtrong drink, even to exceſs, or was an open Sepulchre to give vent to the filth of thine heart, ſhall then be parched with unquenchable thirſt; ſo that with *Dives* thou wouldſt give a World, if thou hadſt it, for one drop of water to aſſwage thy thirſt, and canſt not obtain it.

The pain which men here endure is for the moſt part *particular*, ſome pained in their *head*, ſome in their *back*, and ſome in their *feet*. And ſome of theſe pains are oftimes ſo extream, as thou wouldſt not willingly undergo them to gain a world. But for a man to be tortured and tormented in every part and member of his body at once, muſt needs be very grievous, which is the condition of all the damned in Hell.

By this you may a little conceive the extremity of their torments. But If I had the tongue of Men and Angels, I could not expreſs it to the full. For as in Heaven there is ſuch a fulneſs of joy as the heart of man is not able to conceive, much leſs the tongue of man able to expreſs. So in Hell there is ſuch a fulneſs of ſorrow and torment, as is both beyond expreſſion or conception.

Oh the folly and madneſs of the men of this world, who notwithſtanding the puniſhment of ſin is ſo intollerable, yea and they believe it to be ſo, yet do ſuffer themſelves to be carryed away down into this lake for things of nought: they will dye rather then be wiſe: they will fry and roar and howle in the other World, rather than not ſing and laugh, and be vile and abominable in this World. Ah ſinner, ſhould not the bitter ſting in ſins tayle deter thee more than the falſe beauty of its face allure thee?

Certainly didſt thou but ſeriouſly conſider the extremity, and burning heat of that furnace below, it would make thy ſin to be too hot for thee above ground. This fire would quench thy luſt, and cool thy fleſhly affections, and fetch thee off from thoſe wretched wayes in which thou haſt ſo long, and ſo reſolvedly walked.

Oh ſinner, wouldſt thou never come into this place of torment? deſcend into it daily: look into the pit often, if thou wouldſt not fall into it. If Heaven and all the joy

and glory there will not afford arguments enough to draw thee on after thy God; ſee if Hell and the torments thereof will not yield thee arguments enough to withdraw thee from thy ſins. Wouldſt thou not be enticed to ſin? Let a thought of hell, of death and wrath meet every temptation. In all temptations unto ſin, conſider the fearful iſſue and effect thereof: and though it ſeem never ſo delightful and agreeable to thy natural humour, yet ask, *But what comes after?* Let the dreadful conſequence thereof, which (without true and unfained repentance) is no leſs than eternal fire, deter thee from the ſame. Ah ſinner, ſinner, when thou art bathing thy ſoul by the fire of luſt, conſider how for the ſame thou maiſt burn in the everlaſting flames of Hell. When thou art drenching thy ſelf with the voluptuous draughts of thy carnal pleaſure, think what a drench, what a poyſonous and bitter cup is prepared for thee below. And this may be a ſpecial means to kill that luſt which will otherwiſe kill thy ſoul. Want of conſideration of the fearful iſſue and effects of ſin, is queſtionleſs the cauſe of ſo much ſin and wickedneſs in the World

III. The miſery of the damned is ſet forth in Scripture by ſundry reſemblances, as,

1. *Darkneſs*, yea *outer-darkneſs*. *But the children of the Kingdom ſhall be caſt into outer-darkneſs; there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, Mat. 8. 12. As *light* is one of the moſt comfortable things that man can enjoy? So *darkneſs* is moſt horrible and terrible. Darkneſs was one of the *Ægyptians plagues*, which were all fearfull effects of Gods wrath. It is counted a great ſeverity of puniſhment to caſt men into dark dungeons. For darkneſs doth much affright men, eſpecially, if thy hear hideous and terrible noyſes. What then will be the darkneſs of hell? where ſhall be nothing but weeping and wailing, howling and gnaſhing of teeth, with ſuch like effects of fearful terrour. This is called *outer-darkneſs*, becauſe it is out of the place of bliſs, the place of light, which is no ſmall aggravation thereof.

2. *Torment*. As Luke. 16. 23. *And in hell the rich man liſt up his eyes, being in torment*. Now torment is an extremity of pain, whereof man is very ſenſible, and which is highly

highly grievous unto him. Many torments, which men inflict, cauſe ſuch as are tormented to cry aud howle, and wiſh they were dead, rather than to live in ſuch torment. Oh then what is the torment, which God in his fierce wrath inflicteth on the damned in hell! whom he will make to feel his heavy hand to be the hand of a mighty God. All tortures and torments conſidered together are not comparable thereunto. Take the pains of all diſeaſes incident to our nature, as *ſtone, gout, collick, cramp*, or what other can be named. Add hereunto all the moſt exquiſit tortures that cruel men have inflicted upon others, as *rack, ſtrapado, boyling in lead, pulling the fleſh from the bones with hot pincers*, and ſuch like. Add alſo hereunto all the anguiſh, horrour, and terrour, that ever any man felt in his ſoul, mind and conſcience: let all theſe be joyned together, they are but a *flea-bite* in compariſon of *hell-torments*. The reaſon is evident, becauſe all the fore-mentioned torments here endured, may ſtand with Gods love, and are oft inflicted on his dear children. But that torment is a fruit of his wrath, wherein he ſets himſelf to make ſinners feel the weight of his indignation.

O fooliſh ſinner, thy pleaſures are tormenting pleaſures; thy gains, and thine eaſe, that now thou bleſſeſt thy ſelf in, they are tormenting gains, a tormenting eaſe. Now thou drinkeſt the ſweet, but beware, whatever they are in thy mouth, they are torment in the belly. Buy not an hours eaſe, or pleaſure, at the price of an eternity of torment.

3. Another reſemblance whereby the miſery of the damned is ſet forth, is *Fire*, as *Matth.* 18. 9. This of all other metaphors is moſt frequently uſed; and of all others it is the fitteſt. For *fire* is the fierceſt kind of torment that is, and the moſt intolerable. Great queſtion is made about the kind of it, *Whether the fire of hell be material and corporeal fire, or no.* Surely it is ſuch a fire as ſhall torment both body and ſoul, and that much more intolerably than any fire here below. *Brimſtone* mingled With fire, makes it burn more fiercely: therefore *brimſtone* is oft added to hell-fire, to aggravate the torment thereof. Yea it is ſaid to be *a lake of fire and brimſtone*,

Rev.

Rev. 20. 10. which implyeth a great quantity thereof to make it the hotter.

Fire here below uſeth to burn moſt fiercely in a *furnace*, where it is kept in. Therefore *hell* is ſaid to be a *furnace*, and that *of flaming fire*, Mat. 13.42. 2 Theſ. 1.8. The Furnace into which the three Children were caſt, was exceeding fierce, being made ſeven times hotter than it was wont to be. But how fierce and dreadful will this Furnace be, whoſe fire is unſpeakably hotter, than that was at the hotteſt? *Oh who is able to dwell in this devouring fire? who amongſt us ſhall dwell in thoſe everlaſting burnings*, Jer. 33. 14.

Ah ſinner, ſinner, how canſt thou but quake and tremble at the thought of this fire, at which the very Devils do quake and tremble! Suppoſe thou wert condemned to be caſt (as many of the Martyrs were) into a boyling Caldron, or flaming fire? oh how dreadful and terrible would the apprehenſion thereof be unto thee? and how wouldſt thou cry and roar through the extremity of the torment? But alas, what is a boyling Caldron to that boyling Sea of fire and brimſtone? And what is a flaming fire of Wood and Coal here, to the fire of hell kept in higheſt flame by the breath of Gods wrath: Surely this as far ſurpaſſeth that in heat, as our Chimney fire doth exceed the fire painted on the Wall.

This me-thinks ſhould ſowre the pleaſure of all thy ſinful luſts, and provoke thee forthwith to ſet upon that ſtricter courſe of life, that more ſerious circumſpect conſcientious walking, whereby thou maiſt eſcape theſe heavy things.

Oh, look about thee while it is called to day, run over to Chriſt, lay hold on his righteouſneſs, ſtoop to his Scepter, beg of God, that whatſoever he deny thee, he would not deny his Son to thee, by whom alone thou canſt be freed from this tormening fire. Otherwiſe woe and alas that ever thou wert born.

But oh how wonderfully prodigal are we generally of our ſouls! when that for the vile things here below we are ſo ready to proſtitute them to the luſt of Satan, and expoſe them to the torments of hell-fire. Whereas alas, *what is it to gain the World, and to loſe our Souls?*

What

What, to ſpend our dayes in mirth and jollity, and in a moment to be caſt into hell? It is eaſie for a ſecure unbelieving ſoul to read and here of this fire. But woe and ten thouſand woes to all ſuch, who ſhall feel, and endure, and prove by their experience how hot it is.

IV. The miſery of the damned is likewiſe ſet forth in Scripture by the *perpetuity*, and *eternity* of their torment. *Their worm dyeth not, and their fire is not quenched*, but continueth to burn without end, Mark. 9. 44. And therefore is called *unquenchable fire, and everlaſting fire.* As the *Salamander* is ſaid to live in the fire: So ſhall the wicked live for ever in the fire of hell. Though they ſeek for death, yet they ſhall not find it: though they be alwayes burning, yet they ſhall not be conſumed: though they be alwayes gnawed upon by the worm of Conſcience, yet they ſhall never be devoured. Which makes the miſery of the damned in hell moſt exquiſitely miſerable.

Men in miſery comfort themſelves with hope of an end. The *Priſoner* with hope of Goal-delivery: the *Apprentice* with hope of a freedom and liberty: the *Gally-ſlave* with hope of a ranſome; only the poor wretches in hell have no hope of freedom and liberty at all: they are as far from an end of their torments as at their firſt beginning and entrance thereinto.

If there might be any end of their torments, though it ſhould be after ſo many millions of years, as there are Sands on the Sea-ſhore, or Stars in the Firmament, it would be ſome comfort to thoſe who endure them. But *Eternity* is the very hell of hells, and that which moſt of all breaks the very hearts of the damned. The preſent ſenſe of pain being not ſo grievous to the damned, as it is to think that after thouſands, yea thouſand thouſands of years, they ſhall be as far either from end or from eaſe, as they were the firſt hour of their falling into it. Surely if to a man tormented with the *gout, ſtone*, or *collick*, one night ſeemeth exceeding long; Oh how long do you think *eternity* (that night which ſhall never know morning) will ſeem to thoſe who ſhall lie tormented and roaring in a bed of flame, with wicked fiends, and Devils about them, daily and hourly adding to their torment?

ment? If one ſhort nights pain be ſo tedious and grievous, what will that *eternal* night be?

Ah ſinner, thou art not now able to endure the ſudden ſcorch of a fire, nor to hold one of thy fingers over the flame of a Candle for a quarter of an honr. How wilt thou then endure to ly in a fiery flaming Furnace, not only an hour, or a day, but years, yea millions of years? Some have thus repreſented the eternity of hell-torments. Suppoſe, ſay they, that all the vaſt ſpace, which is between Heaven and Earth, were filled with Sands: and God ſhould command an Angel once in every thouſand years to fetch away one ſmall grain? what an innumerable number of years would be ſpent before all thoſe ſands would be fetcht away? yet ſhalt thou abide thus long in hell-fire: and when they are expired, continue as long again and again, and a thouſand times told, for Eternity knows no beginning, no middle, no end: but after a thouſand thouſand millions of years, there are ſtill as *many more to come*: and when theſe *many more* are come and gone, thy torments are as far from the laſt, as they were at the firſt.

What heart can think of theſe things without horrour and amazement? Suppoſe that for ſome high treaſon againſt the Kings-perſon, thou wert condemned to be caſt into a fiery flaming Furnace, or Caldron of boyling lead, and there to continue a thouſand years, how ſad would thy condition be? yet this were a mercy to hell-torments. For after thou haſt layen ten thouſand, thouſand years in a Furnace of fire, kept up in the higheſt flame by the breath of Gods wrath, there is ſtill as much behind, as there was on thy firſt. day.

Thou ſinnedſt in *thine eternity*, and therefore muſt ſuffer in *Gods eternity*. Thou ſinnedſt againſt an infinite God, deſpiſing his infinite grace and mercy, and the infinite merits of Chriſt: and wouldſt have drawn out thy ſin to the length of eternity: and therefore muſt ſuffer an infinite, eternal puniſhment. Thou never heartily repentedſt of thy ſins, and therefore God will never repent him of thy ſufferings. This is the day of *Gods-long-ſuffering*, and that will be the day of *thy long-ſuffering*, when thou ſhalt *ſuffer long* for thine abuſing *the long-ſuffering of God*.

Ah

Ah ſinner, ſinner, what ſtupidity hath ſeiſed on thee that thou ſhouldſt be lyable to *eternal* torments in hell, and yet live as careleſly and prophanely, as if it did no way at all concern thee? Know for certain, that though thou doſt not as yet feel theſe torments, yet thou art every moment ſubject, and haſting thereunto. A cloud of fire and brimſtone hangeth over thine head and the Lord knoweth how ſuddenly it may fall upon thee. It is certainly decreed in Heaven, that if thou turn not here from thy ſins unto God, by true and unfeigned repentance, and turn over a new leaf, leading a new courſe of life, thou ſhalt lye in a lake of brimſtone to *all eternity*; and thou knoweſt not how ſoon God may ſeal the warrant for thine execution.

Oh that I could prevail with thee once a day to ſteep thy thoughts in a ſerious meditation of the Eternity of hell-torments. Certainly it would abate the heat of thy luſts, and take off the edge of thy love to thy moſt pleaſing vanites, and ſtop thee in the eager purſuit of thy carnal pleaſures. For wouldſt thou be content to run the hazard of ſuch torments for thy preſent eaſe? of ſuch plagues for thy preſent pleaſures? of ſuch thick darkneſs for the light of thine own ſparks? of ſuch an Eternity for a few jocund hours? Oh when wilt thon awake from this folly?

Thou who now giveſt thy ſelf up to the gratifying of thy ſinful luſts, to the ſatisfying of thy brutiſh pleaſures, who art ſowing daily to the fleſh, ſowing oaths, and curſes, and lyes, and adulteries, *&c.* without conſidering what a bitter harveſt thou ſhalt have after ſuch a black ſeed-time: ſhould I but ask thee, how much pleaſure thou wouldſt take to lye but one day in ſuch a burning Furnace, as *Nebuchadnezzars* was, after it was heated ſeven times more for the three Children? I dare boldly ſay, thou wouldſt not lye therein one quarter of an hour for all the pleaſures and riches in the World. How is it then, that for a little pleaſure, which endureth but for a moment, thou doſt ſo little regard the lying in the Furnace of hell-fire to all eternity?

In the fear of God therefore often think as of the *extremity*, ſo of the *eternity* of hell-torments. Me-thinks the very

very thought thereof ſhould forthwith call off the *drunkard* from following the Ale-houſe with his vain companions: and the *ſwearer* from taken the name of God ſo often in vain: and the *voluptuous perſon* from his ſenſual delights, and wanton daliances: and the *worlding* from his immoderate ſeeking after earthly riches and treaſures; and cauſe every of them out of hand to ſet upon another and a wiſer courſe, to mind the good of their immortal ſouls, and bethink themſelves in earneſt how they might eſcape the wrath to come; to caſt away ſin, to cry after mercy, to run over to Jeſus Chriſt, with their tongues, with their eyes, with their hearts full of prayers; *Lord ſave me or I periſh: Lord teach me what I muſt do to be ſaved. Lord pardon me, Lord turn me, Lord ſanctifie me, Lord help me that I come not into this place of torment.* But when will the folly of fools depart from them? Oh the ſtupendious brutiſhneſs of this mad and ſenſual World! though they know theſe things, and have been forewarned of them, yet they have not the heart to fly from the wrath to come.

Thus much for the clearing and ſetting forth of the firſt truth to be embraced towards the working of regeneration in mens ſouls; namely, *That every man in his ſtate of unregeneracy is in a miſerable and dreadful condition.* Wherein I have the longer inſiſted that thereby I might ſtartle and awaken unregenerate men out of their carnal ſecurity, unto a lively ſenſe and apprehenſion of the dreadful danger they are in, ſo long as they live and lye in their unregenenerate eſtate: and ſo countermine the great deſign of the Devil againſt their ſouls, which is to keep them blindfold and ignorant of their wretched miſerable ſtate, by perſwading them that their condition is as good and ſafe as the beſt. For certainly were they but ſenſible of their preſent condition, how they were loſt and undone for ever, if they ſhould dye in their natural and unregenerate eſtate, the Devil with all his skill and cunning would be hard put to it to perſwade them to live another day therein, leſt they ſhould ſuddenly be ſnatcht away to hell: would they then turn ſuch a deaf ear to the Voice of the Goſpel? would they then make ſuch excuſes, and make ſuch delayes when Chriſt calls them to repentance? *I*

cannot

cannot be at the pains, I cannot bear the labour, and the ſorrow of a penitent life, I cannot part with mine eaſe, my pleaſures, my friends and companions, at leaſt, not yet awhile. Oh the ſenſe of an hell would ſilence all ſuch excuſes, and ſhake off all ſuch delayes. To day, to day, O my ſoul, hearken to thy Lord, leaſt it be too late by to morrow.

Now ſtand ſinner, ſtand and pauſe a while on what hath been hitherto ſpoken. Look back and conſider, Is this thy ſtate? Is this thy portion which hath hitherto been deſcribed? Art thou a ſinner, a willful and impenitent ſinner, and doth not all this belong to thee? ſearch the Scriptures, believe the Scriptures, and then ſay if this be not the place of them that know not God, and obey not the Goſpel of Chriſt. But what ſaiſt thou, is it good for thee to be here? Is this a ſtate to acquieſce in? to be at eaſe and ſecure, to be ſo merry and jolly in? Is this the ſtate thou art ſo loth to be delivered from? Doſt thou hang over the burning furnace by the ſmall thread of thy life, which as ſoon as it is ſnapt off, thou tumbleſt headlong into this bottomleſs gulf, and doſt thou ſcoff and ſcorn at the poor Miniſters and Ambaſſadours of Chriſt that come to thee only to ſnatch thy ſoul out of this amazing danger?

But hearken ſinner, wilt thou eſcape? wilt thou be redeemed, Wilt thou be delivered from all this? would he be a meſſenger of good tydings? wouldſt thou bid him welcome that ſhould bring thee news of redemption from all this? why, is there any hope of that? hope of deliverance, hope of ſalvation? what for ſuch a ſinner? what from ſo great deſtruction? what is there any hope for ſuch a great ſinner, ſuch an hardned ſinner, ſuch an old ſinner, that hath even one foot already in hell? why, wilt thou hearken? conſider, conſider, what ſhall further be ſpoken, and thou ſhalt ſee that there is yet *hope for thee*, even *for thee*, concerning this thing. As great as thy ſins are, as great as thy danger is, if thou will yet hearken, there is hope that thou maiſt be ſaved,

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Sheweth that there is hope of Mercy for the worſt of Sinners.

II. ANother truth to be embraced in order to thy Regeneration, is this, *That there is hope of mercy for the greateſt ſinners*

Though the condition of men in their ſtate of unregeneracy be very *deplorable*, yet it is not *deſperate*: there is hope of mercy for the worſt of them, which will appear from a due conſideration,

1. *Of Gods willingneſs to ſave the worſt of ſinners.*
2. *Of the all-ſufficiency of Chriſts Sacrifice.*
3. *Of Chriſts readineſs to embrace all poor ſinners, who will but come unto him, and receive him upon the terms of the Goſpel,*

1. Gods willingneſs to ſave the worſt of ſinners, appeareth from his many gracious promiſes to receive them upon their repentance Iſa.55.7. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* And ſaith the Prophet Ezekiel, Ezek.18.21,22. *If the wicked will turn from all his ſins that he hath commited, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawfull and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not dye: All his tranſgreſſions that he hath committed, they ſhall not be mentioned unto him, in his righteouſneſs that he hath done, he ſhall live.* Theſe and ſuch like gracious promiſes of God in his Word for the encouragement of poor ſinners to turn from their ſins unto him, cannot but ſtrongly argue his willingneſs to have them ſaved.

2. As if this were not enough to ſet forth Gods willingneſs; to his *promiſes* he hath added his *oath*, *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live*, Ezek, 33.11. Here the Lord ſweareth by himſelf, there being

being no greater to ſwear by. As if he had ſaid, As ſure as I am the true and living God, ſo certainly I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that he ſhould turn from his wicked wayes, and embrace my mercy in Jeſus Chriſt. Becauſe wicked men are ſo hardly perſwaded of Gods willingneſs to ſave them, therefore to convince them thereof, and encourage them to turn from their ſins unto him, he takes his oath on it, that he is infinitely more willing that wicked men ſhould repent, and be ſaved, than that they ſhould periſh in their ſins, and be damned.

3. *Gods willingneſs appeareth from his free offer and tender of Chriſt to all who will but receive him by the hand of faith.* as none are named, ſo none are excluded. The Angel that brought from Heaven the tydings of Chriſts birth, ſaith, that it was *for all people*, *Behold*, ſaith he, *I bring you tydings of great joy which ſhall be to all people* : there being no ſtate or condition of men which God hath excluded from Salvation by Chriſt, which doth clearly evidence his willingneſs to ſave poor ſinners.

Oh ſinner, ſeeing God doth freely offer Chriſt to all, without exception of any, do not thou except thy ſelf, limit not where God hath not limited; ſay not I am unworthy, or my ſins are many and hainous, cloathed with many aggravating circumſtances; but ſtir up thy ſelf to adventure thy ſoul on Chriſt, upon the general offer of him in the Goſpel. The firſt work of faith in many hath been to adventure their ſouls on Chriſt upon the free offer of him to all indefinitely. Do thou in like manner adventure to caſt thy ſelf upon the free grace of God in Chriſt, with reſolution to abandon thy luſts for the time to come, and to take Chriſt for thy Lord and Husband, as well as for thy Prieſt and Saviour. This is that which God requireth; and if he hath perſwaded thine heart to this, it is a good ſign that mercy is intended for thee.

4. *His willingneſs further appeareth by his ſending Miniſters as his Ambaſſadours unto poor ſinners, upon terms of peace and reconciliation,* as the Apoſtle expreſſeth, 2 Cor. 5. 20. *We are Ambaſſadours to beſeech you to be reconciled to God.* As if he had ſaid, We are commanded by the

Lord our master, to offer you terms of peace and reconciliation, to profer you peace and pardon, if you will heartily turn from your sins unto God. We are sent as Ambassadours to acquaint you, what Christ hath done and suffered for your redemption, how he hath fulfilled the Law for you, and offered up his life as a Sacrifice and satisfaction to Gods justice for your sins, and how you may be happy for ever, if you will rest upon Christs perfect righteousness and all-sufficient Sacrifice for life and salvation, and give up your selves unto him, to serve and obey his laws and commandments. I do here therefore as Gods Ambassadour, in his name, proclame to the worst of you, to the greatest and oldest sinner; that you may have mercy and Salvation if you will abandon your lusts, and close with Jesus Christ, upon the terms of the Gospel, receiving him for your *King*, *Priest*, and *Prophet*.

Oh how can we but stand amazed at the riches of Gods mercy and goodness, that when we, upon the knees of our souls, should have fought unto him for peace and reconciliation, yet that he, being the great Lord of Heaven and of Earth, should condescend so far as to send *Ambassadours unto us*, sinful dust and ashes, to intreat us to be reconciled to him, to accept his grace and favour! Oh, how doth this evidence his great willingness that poor sinners should not perish, but have everlasting life! Certainly if God had taken more pleasure in your damnation than in your salvation, he would never have sent his Ministers as Ambassadours to shew you the way and means of salvation, by receiving Christ as your Lord and Saviour, and giving up your selves unto him; he would never have perswaded you by so many arguments, and beseeched you to turn from your sins unto him, that your souls might live in glory to all Eternity.

5. *Gods willingness doth likewise appear from the greatness of his patience in bearing with sinners.* For the Lord having used all means for the conversion of poor sinners, he waits with much patience and long-suffering for their repentance; to see whether they will turn from their sins unto him or no. He waits upon the Swearer, the Drunkard, the Whore-Master, the covetous Worldling day after day, week after week, year after year, crying after

after them, as he did after *Jeruſalem*, Jer. 13.27. *Oh will ye not be made clean? Oh when will it once be?* When wilt thou leave thy Swearing, thy Drinking, thy Whoring, thy Coveteouſneſs, and the like? when will it once be? oh ſinner, who art now grown old in ſin, how long hath the Lord waited on thee? for ſhame, let him wait no longer, but turn thee, turn thee from thy wicked wayes and courſes, that thou maiſt receive mercie from him. This patience of God towards ſinners, muſt needs evidence his willingneſs to have them ſaved. For if he had not been willing, he would have cut them off long ago, and have dealt with them, as he did with the Devils, who had no ſooner ſinned, but he clapt his chains upon them, and ſtill reſerves them to the great day in chains of darkneſs.

6. *Gods willingneſs to ſave the very worſt of ſinners, is moſt lively repreſented in the Parable of the Prodigal*, as it is recorded, *Luke* 15. 20. &c. where we read how the *Prodigal* no ſooner reſolved to go to his Father, and acknowledge his offences, but his Father prevented him, for *when he was yet a great way off, his Father ſaw him, and had compaſſion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kiſſed him.* Where there are ſeveral paſſages very obſervable in the *Father of the Prodigal.*

1. *His quick obſervation, For when he was yet a great way off, his Father ſaw him.* Before he eſpyed his Father, his Father ſaw him. Though God is many times unwilling to ſee the ſinner, yet is he at all times very willing to eſpy the penitent. Yea, no ſooner doth a ſinner reſolve to turn from his ſins unto God, but he ſpyes him and pities him.

2. *His preſent commiſeration, His Father ſaw him and had compaſſion on him*, Though God looks on obſtinate *ſinners* with *indignation*, yet he looks on the *penitent* with *commiſeration.* When the heart of a ſinner is penitentially touched, then the bowels of Gods mercy are moved within him. When *Ephraim repented and turned*, the Lord ſaith, *My bowels are troubled for him, I will ſurely have mercy on him.* Jer. 31. 20.

3. *His ſpeedy readineſs to embrace him.* It is ſaid, the Son *went* to his Father, but the Father *ran* to meet his

penitent Son, ſhewing how ready and ſwift the Lord is to ſhew mercy to a penitent returning ſinner. There is a great difference betwixt Gods coming to puniſh a ſinner, and his coming to ſhew mercy to a penitent. He is ſaid, to be *ſlow to wrath*, but he is *ſwift to ſhew mercy*. As ſoon as ever *Ephraim* ſaid, *I repented*, inſtantly it follows, *I will ſurely have mercy upon him, ſaith the Lord, Jer.* 31. 19, 20. A ſinner no ſooner turns from his ſins unto God by repentance, but God turns unto him in mercy.

4. *His wonderful tenderneſs. The Father fell on his neck.* To have taken him by the hand had been much, but to fall on his neck and embrace him, and that as he was in his loathſome ſtinking rags, was a greater favour than could be expected. How open are the arms of mercy to embrace a penitent returning ſinner!

5. *His ſtrong affection*, expreſſed by kiſſing his penitent Son, for as it follows, *He kiſſed him.* He did not onely embrace him, but he likewiſe kiſſed him. And as St. *Auſtin* obſerveth, *Nondum uno verbo audito, ſqualidum & deformem amplectitur*, &c. *Before the Son had ſpoken one word unto his Father, the Father falleth upon his neck, and kiſſed his ragged and deformed Son; which ſheweth Gods willingneſs to receive and embrace all poor penitent ſinners, that have but a thought of turning from their ſins unto him.* Yea, the Fathers kiſſing of his returning Son, was to ſhew that he rejoyced as much at his penitential return, as he had grieved at his ſinful departure.

Oh ſinner, What an encouragement ſhould this be unto thee to turn from thy ſins unto God, who hath as an eye of mercy to eſpy a returning ſinner; ſo an heart full of mercy and compaſſion to pity a returning ſinner; and feet of mercy to meet a returning ſinner; and arms of mercy to embrace a returning ſinner, and lips of mercy to kiſs a returning ſinner, in token that he is reconciled to him. Oh therefore let me prevail with thee, whoſoever thou art, how many and hainous ſoever thy ſins are, to turn from them unto God by true and unfained repentance, and that with hope of mercy and acceptance, in and through the merits and interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt.

II. That there is hope of mercy for the worſt of ſinners, apeareth *from the all-ſufficiency of Chriſts Sacrifice*

fice offered upon the Croſs, and the fulneſs of ſatisfaction that was thereby made to the juſtice of God for the ſins of the whole World. So much the Apoſtle expreſſeth, where he ſaith, *He his able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him.* The word tranſlated, *able,* doth imply *power* to do a thing. And the word Εἰς τὸ παντελὲς tranſlated, *uttermoſt,* is of a very large extent, it extends ſo far that we cannot look beyond it, no not in our thoughts: for let a man imagine his caſe to be never ſo deſperate, his ſins to be never ſo many and hainous, yet Chriſt by his death is able to ſave him from them all.

And therefore this we muſt lay as a foundation-truth that *Chriſts Sacrifice was a full ſatisfaction to the juſtice of his Father for the ſins of the world*; it being the Sacrifice of the Son of God, even of him who was God as well as man. For this is that which added an infinite value to what Chriſt did and ſuffered for our redemption, that it was the obedience, and the ſufferings of the Son of God, of him who was God equal with the Father: whereupon the *blood of Chriſt,* whereby we are redeemed is called *precious blood,* 1 Pet. 1. 19. being of infinite price and merit, able to countervail and anſwer for all our ſins, and to free us from the puniſhment due unto us for the ſame

Beſides, Chriſts reſurrection from the dead is an evident demonſtration that his death was an all-ſufficient Sacrifice and full ſatisfaction to Gods juſtice for our ſins. For God having ſeized on Chriſt, as our *Surety,* and caſt, him into the priſon of the grave, for the debt of our ſins, he could not have come forth till he had payed the ut termoſt farthing. But by his riſing out of the priſon of the grave, we are aſſured that Gods juſtice is abundantly ſatisfied by the death of Jeſus Chriſt.

Labour therefore to get thine heart truly ſatisfied in the all-ſufficiency of Chriſts Sacrifice, that his death was a full ſatisfaction to Gods juſtice for thy ſins; for otherwiſe when either thy conſcience or the Devil begin to aggravate thy ſins, and to ſet before thee the number and the hainouſneſs of them, thou wilt be at a loſs, and even ready to ſit down in deſpair: whereas if thou didſt cleerly apprehend what a full ſatisfaction the death of Chriſt

was to Gods juſtice for all thy ſins, thou wouldſt not fear what either thy conſcience or the Devil could object againſt thee. In *Rom.* 8.33. We read how the Apoſtle from the conſideration of Chriſts all-ſufficient Sacrifice and full ſatisfaction to Gods juſtice by his death, did triumph over ſin, and Satan. For having treated thereof in the former part of the Chapter; In the latter part thereof, *ver.* 33, 34. he ſpeaks as one raviſhed with abundance of comfort: yea, challengeth the devil and all the World to object what they could againſt the pardon of his ſins; *Who*, ſaith he, *ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that juſtifieth; Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that dyed.* As if he had ſaid, let Conſcience and carnal Reaſon, let Law and Sin, let Hell and Devil object what they can; let them object the number and hainouſneſs of my ſins, what is that? *ſeeing Chriſt hath dyed*, even Chriſt the Son of God, hath offered up his own life, as an all-ſufficient Sacrifice, and thereby abundantly ſatisfied Gods juſtice for my ſins. Beloved, the caſe between God and us, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, is not much unlike the caſe of a *Creditor*, a *Debtor*, and a *Surety*. Though the debtor be altogether unable to ſatisfie his debt, or to contribute any thing thereunto; yet if his ſurety have fully diſcharged the debt, and cancelled the bond, the debtor is ſafe enough from impriſonment, or danger of arreſt. In like manner though we were much indebted unto God, and were no way able to make the leaſt ſatisfaction for our ſins; yet ſeeing our ſurety Jeſus Chriſt hath taken upon him the debt of our ſins, and fully ſatisfied Gods juſtice for the ſame, by offering up his own life as an all-ſufficient Sacrifice upon the Croſs, we ſhall not need to fear the accuſations of Conſcience, or of carnal reaſon, or of all the Devils in Hell, if we do apply the merits of Chiſts death unto our own ſouls comfort.

III. That there is hope of Mercy for the worſt of ſinners, appeareth from *Chriſts Willingneſs to receive and embrace all poor ſinners, who will but come unto him, and receieves him upon the terms of the Goſpel.*

1. *Chriſts Willingneſs appeareth from his frequent perſonal invitations of all ſorts of ſinners, even the worſt, to come unto him for life and ſalvation, as* Math. 11. 28, *come unto*

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me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt. In which we find no exception either of perſons or ſins : but whoſoever thou art, rich or poor, male or female; how many and hainous ſoever thy ſins are, if thou art but ſenſible of them, thou art invited to go unto Jeſus Chriſt, and to caſt thy ſelf, and the burden of thy ſins upon him. And, Rev. 22. 17. *Let him that is a thirſt come. And whoever will let him take the Water of life freely*; That is, in whomſoever there is but an earneſt will, and longing deſire to partake of Chriſt, and of the benefits of his death and paſſion, they are invited to come unto him. Now theſe gracous invitations of Jeſus Chriſt unto poor thirſty ſinners to come unto him, that their ſouls might live, muſt needs argue his incomparable willingneſs to have them ſaved.

2. Chriſt knowing our backwardneſs to come unto him, to the forementioned invitations adds his awakening excitation, or proclamation, crying out, *Ho every one that thirſteth come ye to the Waters*, &c. Iſa. 55. 1. And becauſe many poor ſouls are apt to ſay, *Alas there is nothing in me to commend me unto Chriſt, I have no goodneſs, no righteouſneſs of mine own*, therefore Chriſt adds, *He that hath no money*, that is, he who hath no goodneſs, no righteouſneſs of his own, which is there meant by *money*, let him come. And indeed they are the fitteſt to go unto Jeſus Chriſt, for it is the empty ſoul that is moſt capable of Chriſt, the ſoul emptied of all ſelf-righteouſneſs, and ſelf-goodneſs. Whereas that ſoul which with the Church of *Laodicea*, is rich and full with a conceit of its own righteouſneſs, hath no room for Chriſt.

3. Chriſts willingneſs appeareth by the many ſweet and gracious promiſes which he hath made in his Word unto all thoſe who by faith come unto him. As that known promiſe, Mat. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*, that is, I will eaſe you and refreſh you, I will comfort you with the aſſurance of the pardon of your ſins, I will give you peace of Conſcience here, and eternal peace and reſt with me for ever in my Kingdom. And queſtionleſs, one ſpecial reaſon why many find ſo little peace and comfort in their ſouls, is becauſe they go not unto Jeſus Chriſt, they caſt not

themſelves and the burden of their ſins upon him, which is the fountain of peace and comfort, and from whom alone it is to be had.

And, *Mark* 16. 15, 16. ſaith our Saviour, *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not ſhall be damned*; that is, He who goeth out of himſelf unto Chriſt for life, *ſhall be ſaved*, from the wrath of God, from the curſe of the Law, from the guilt and power of ſin, yea from eternal death and condemnation, and ſhall inherit eternal life and ſalvation. *But he that believeth not ſhall be damned*, that is, He who refuſeth to go unto Jeſus Chriſt, preferring his luſts and corruptions before him, ſhall be caſt into that burning lake, where is nothing but weeping and wailing and gnaſhing of teeth.

Oh how earneſtly doth Chriſt preſs ſinners to come unto him that they might have life, promiſing Heaven, and ſalvation upon their coming: and threatning hell and damnation upon their refuſing. And what more prevailing argument could he uſe, to perſwade ſinners to come, unto him? Which muſt needs evidence his exceeding great willingneſs to embrace them with the arms of his mercy upon their coming.

4. Chriſts Willingneſs appeareth from his end of coming into the World, which was to ſave poor loſt ſinners. He left his Crown and Throne, his Royal Court, and glorious Robes, and cloathed himſelf with the rags of our humanity, for no other end but to ſeek, and to ſave that which is loſt; as the Apoſtle expreſſeth, 1 Tim. 1. 15. *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the World to ſave ſinners.* So that the Salvation of poor loſt ſinners was his great deſign in coming into the World. He came from Heaven to earth for this very end, that he might ſend us from Earth to Heaven. The Son of God became the Son of man, that we the ſons of men might become the Sons of God. Certainly that Chriſt ſhould come out of Heaven, to keep us out of hell, that he ſhould uncrown himſelf to Crown us, muſt needs argue a wonderful willingneſs in him to have poor ſinners ſaved.

5. *Chriſts Willingneſs appeareth by his rejecting of none who ſincerely go unto him, though never ſo weak and worthleſs*

leſs in themſelves. Never did any ſinner go to him, but he accepted of him, as himſelf expreſſeth, Joh. 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me, ſhall come to me, and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt out*; but receive him to mercy. Hath Chriſt promiſed this, and will he not be as good as his Word? Did he ever break his word with any poor ſoul, though never ſo unworthy? Did he ever caſt away any who came unto him? And is he not *the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever?*

Go ſinner, fear not, go upon the credit of this word, which he hath ſpoken, *I will in no wiſe caſt them out.* Though the Devil ſay, go not, though thy miſgiving heart ſay, go not, he will not regard thee, he will never look on ſuch a vile wretch, he will caſt thee out; yet ſince he hath ſaid, *He will not*, go and thou ſhalt find mercy.

Thus have I by ſeveral demonſtrations proved, as *God the Fathers willingneſs to ſave the worſt of ſinners*; So *Chriſts readineſs to embrace all poor ſinners who will but come unto him for life and ſalvation*; Wherein I have the longer inſiſted, becauſe I know no better argument to prevail with ſinners, to turn from their ſins unto God by true and unfeigned repentance, and to cloſe with Jeſus Chriſt by a true and lively faith, than a ſerious conſideration, as of Gods readineſs to ſave the worſt of ſinners upon their turning unto him: ſo of Chriſts Willingneſs to embrace all poor ſinners, who will come unto him, and receive him as their Lord and Saviour.

I have read a ſtory of a *Gentlewoman* who was condemned to dye for killing her own child, whereupon divers Miniſters came to viſit her, and perceiving her little affected with her ſin, and ſad condition, they laboured to ſet before her the hainouſneſs of her ſin, and the dreadfulneſs of her condition, without hearty and deep repentance. All which little moved her, ſeeming rather the more hardened in her ſin. But at laſt another Reverend Divine hearing of her obdurate hardneſs, notwithſtanding all that was ſaid unto her; went and preached to her the abundant riches of Gods mercy in Chriſt, how ready he was to embrace with the arms of his free grace, every penitent ſinner; and how willing Chriſt was to receive all poor ſinners, who would go unto him, and caſt themſelves

ſelves into his arms, how many and hainous ſoever their ſins were, and thereupon told her, there was hope of mercy for her, if ſhe were heartily ſorry for her ſins, and would adventure her ſoul upon Chriſt, notwithſtanding the greatneſs and hainouſneſs of her ſin, *What! mercy for me? ſaid ſhe, that is impoſſible*, &c. Whereupon the Miniſter proceeded further to ſet forth the freeneſs of Gods grace, and riches of his mercy to all penitent and believing ſinners, declaring unto her, how God delighted in mercy, and that where ſin had abounded, there his grace and mercy would much more abound, or to that purpoſe. And thereupon ſhe preſently fell a weeping, wringing her hands, and crying for mercy, and dyed very comfortably, as it is related, having had the mercy of God abundantly revealed to her before her death.

And truely, ſinner, as it was my deſign, ſo my hearts deſire, in ſetting forth Gods willingneſs to ſave the very worſt of ſinners upon their repentance; and Chriſts readineſs to embrace them with the arms of his mercy, that it might have the ſame effect in thee, as it had in the forementioned Gentle-woman. And oh that the conſideration thereof would melt thine heart into tears of unfeigned ſorrow for thy ſins paſt, and ſtir thee up to turn from them unto God by hearty repentance, and to cloſe with Jeſus Chriſt upon the terms of the Goſpel. Oh that I could prevail with thee, as to give a bill of divorce to thy luſts and corruptions, ſo to give up thy ſelf unto Chriſt, and to adventure thy ſoul upon him, reſting upon his perfect righteouſneſs, and all-ſufficient Sacrifice, for the pardon of thy ſins here, and for eternal life and ſalvation hereafter! If Chriſt be ſo willing to receive thee, why ſhouldſt not thou be willing to go unto him, and that with confidence of acceptance? Salvation is this day offered unto thee, the golden Scepter is held out unto thee, Oh ſtretch forth the hand of faith to lay hold and embrace the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; ſo ſhalt thou be happy to all Eternity, *For whoſoever believeth in Jeſus Chriſt ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life. Thus much of the truths to be embraced in order to your Regeneration.* Joh. 3. 16.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Sheweth the Duties to be Practiſed in order to your Regeneration.

HAving ſhewed you the *truths* to be embraced in order to your Regeneration. I come now to the *Duties* on your part to be practiſed, and performed.

I. From the conſideration of the dreadfulneſs of thy condition, ſo long as thou continueſt in thine unregenerate eſtate; and of the hope thou haſt of a bleſſed change; *ſtir up in thy ſelf an earneſt longing, reſtleſs deſire after the new birth*, that thou maiſt in truth ſay, 'O that I were Regenerate and born anew! Oh that 'the Image of the Devil might be razed out, and the 'Image of God imprinted in me! O that a bleſſed 'change were wrought in my ſoul, a change from na-'ture to grace, from darkneſs to light, from the 'Kingdom of Saran to the Kingdom of the Lord Je-'ſus! Oh that I might become a new creature, re-'newed throughout, in all the faculties of my ſoul, 'and all the parts of my body!

As *Rachel* cryed, *Give me Children or elſe I dye.* So do thou cry out and ſay, *Give me this new birth, let me be born again by the ſpirit, or elſe I ſhall dye, not only the firſt, but likewiſe the ſecond death, and be undone for ever.* And know for thy comfort, if thou canſt find any ſuch longing deſire in thy ſoul, thou art not far from this new birth, from the work of Regeneration in thy ſoul. For this longing deſire after this new birth, will put thee upon the uſe of all ordinances and means God ſtath ſanctified for the attaining thereof.

II. *Labour to get thine heart deeply and throughly affected with a ſenſe of thy miſerable condition by nature.* It is not ſufficient to know thy condition to be ſad and deplorable, ſo long as thon continueſt in thine unregenerate eſtate: but thy care and endeavour muſt be to get thine heart throughly affected therewith. If you look into the

the Scriptures you ſhall find this qualification required in the perſons whom Chriſt came to ſave, and whom he invites to come unto him. Our bleſſed Saviour ſpeaking to *Zacheus* ſaith, Lu. 19. 10. *The Son of man is come to ſeek and to ſave that which is loſt.* Where by the *loſt*, whom Chriſt came to ſave, are not meant every ſinner, who indeed are loſt men, but ſuch as have a ſpiritual feeling of the woful plight and condition wherein they are by reaſon of their ſins. And again ſaith our Saviour, Mat. 9. 13. *I am not come to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.* As by the *righteous* are meant ſuch as are ſo in their own opinion, and conceit, ſo by *ſinners* are meant ſuch as are ſenſible of their wretched, miſerable condition, and grone under the weight and burthen of their ſins; whom Chriſt eſpecially invites to come unto him, ſaying, *Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* Mat. 11. 28.

Q. If any ſhall ask, how may I get my heart deeply affected with a ſenſe of my miſerable condition by nature?

A. 1. *Steep thy thoughts frequently in a ſerious meditation of thy ſad and deplorable condition, ſo long as thou continueſt in thine unregenerate eſtate.* How thou art no better then a ſervant to ſin; and ſlave to thy luſts, under the bondage and command of Satan, doing his drudgery: yea and under the curſe of God, and guilt of all thy ſins; and lyable to all ſorts of Judgements, both *temporal, ſpiritual* and *eternal.* Conſider likewiſe the miſeries which will accompany thee at thy death, and after thy death, even at the day of Judgement, and after the day of Judgement; when thou ſhalt not only be deprived of all happineſs, but expoſed to ſuch miſeries as neither the tongue of man can expreſs, nor the heart of man conceive, and that to all Eternity, if thou dyeſt in thine unregenerate eſtate. Ah ſinner, if thou wouldſt but frequently chew this bitter pill, it would not only purge thee of thy ſinful corruptions and noyſome humours, which now are predominant in thee, but likewiſe exceedingly make to thy ſpiritual health and welfare.

2. *Be earneſt with God in prayer that by his ſpirit he would convince thee of thy miſerable condition by nature, and make thee truly and throughly ſenſible thereof.*

III. *Labour*

III. *Labour to be truly humbled for thy ſins as the cauſe of thy preſent ſad condition.* It is not ſufficient to get thine heart in ſome meaſure affected with the ſenſe thereof, but thy care muſt likewiſe be to get thine heart into an humbled and broken frame for the ſame. Having ſpent many years in ſinning, what canſt thou do leſs then ſpend ſome hours in mourning and ſorrowing for the ſame? Having all thy life long broken the moſt holy and righteous Laws of God, what canſt thou do leſs, then to get thine heart broken for the ſame? which uſually goeth before, or at leaſt accompanieth our new birth. For as no Child is ordinarily born without ſome throws, ſo no man is ordinarily regenerated, and born anew by the Spirit, without ſome pangs of ſorrow and humiliation, though not all with a like meaſure: it being ſanctified by God to be the entrance into the ſtate of grace.

Humiliation is as neceſſary to ſalvation, as faith: and you may as well think of being ſaved without faith as without repentance and humiliation, which like *John Baptiſt, prepareth the way for Chriſt*, and therefore is the moſt immediate diſpoſition that God uſually worketh in the ſoul, before he worketh faith to cloſe with Jeſus Chriſt. For until thou beeſt truly humbled under a ſenſe and apprehenſion of thy ſins and miſery it is not poſſible thou ſhouldſt heartily deſire Chriſt, much leſs cordially embrace him, as thy Saviour and Redeemer. Oh therefore labour in the uſe of all means God hath ſanctified, to get thine heart kindly humbled and broken for thy ſins. To this end,

1. *Look back into thy life, and call to mind as many of thy ſins as poſſibly thou canſt*; the ſins of thy youth, as well as of thy riper years; thy ſins of omiſſion as well as thy ſins of commiſſion; yea the ſins of thy holy ſervices. Eſpecially call to mind the greateſt and groſſeſt of thy ſins, though they were commited long ago. Thus did the *Prodigal* begin his humiliation and repentance, by a ſerious examination of his former courſe of life, calling to remembrance his departure from ſuch a gracius Father, his own wanderings in the wayes of wickedneſs, in which he had loſt himſelf, and then as the text noteth, Luk. 15. 13, *He aroſe and came to his Father, and with tears ſaid unto him, Father*

I have ſinned againſt Heaven and againſt thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son. To acknowledge thy ſelf in the general to be a ſinner, works but a formal kind of repentance and humiliation, if any at all. But if thou wouldſt be truly humbled, thou muſt deſcend to thy ſpecial, and particular ſins, ſaying, *this evil have I done, and that good have I left undone.*

2. *Conſider together with the number, the hainouſneſs of thy ſins.* To this end call to mind the aggravating circumſtances of them, as how thou haſt ſinned againſt the motions of Gods ſpirit, the admonitions of his Miniſters, the checks of thine own conſcience, againſt the light of nature, againſt the patience and long ſuffering of God, which ſhould have led thee to repentance.

3. *Seriouſly conſider the fearful threatnings againſt ſin and ſinners,* which are all judgements and plagues here, and eternal death and condemnation hereafter; and apply them to thy ſelf, reaſoning thus, *If the leaſt tranſgreſſion of the Law deſerveth the curſe of God, yea all judgements and plagues here, and eternal condemnation hereafter: then how many curſes and plagues? what and how great condemnation have I deſerved? who have committed ſins innumerable for number, and hainous in their quality.* And withal conſider the truth and faithfulneſs of God in making good his *threatnings* as well as his *promiſes.*

4. *Beg this great Mercy of an humbled heart from God.* For it is he who muſt ſtrike our ſtony hearts, theſe hard Rocks of ours, before they can yield any water of true repentance.

And that thy Prayers may be the more prevalent, plead that gracious promiſe of God, to take away the ſtony hearts out of our fleſh, and to give us hearts of fleſh. Hath God promiſed, and is there no hope in the promiſe? Is there hope, and wilt thou not lay hold on that hope? plead with thy God upon his own word, *Is not this thy Word, O Lord? Haſt thou not ſaid, thou wilt make this ſtone fleſh? will it ever be done, if thou doſt it not? wilt not thou do what thou haſt ſaid? Is it not thy will that I ſhould believe thou wilt? Oh perform thy word unto thy Servant, wherein thou haſt commanded me to put my truſt.*

And be importunate in this requeſt of thine unto God, often re-

renewing thy prayers, and never give over till thou find thine hard heart brought into a mourning and melting frame. Though God for a while ſeemeth deaf to thy Prayers, yet be not thou dumb, many petitions he cannot deny.

IV. *Reſolve to give a preſent bill of divorce to all thy ſinful luſts and pleaſures, utterly to renounce and forſake thine old ſinful courſe of life, and to ſet upon a new courſe, to ſerve God in holineſs and righteouſneſs all the remaining part of thy life.* Its vain for thee to lament and bewail thy paſt ſins, if thou wilt not give over thy ſinning trade. For as the Apoſtle adviſeth, Thou muſt firſt *put off the old man with his corrupt luſts, before thou put on the new man.* Thou therefore who haſt accuſtomed thy ſelf to ſwearing and curſing, to whoring and drinking, to ſcoffing and railing againſt the people of God, reſolve to ſwear and curſe no more, to whore and drink no more, to ſcoff and rail no more; but to caſt them away with deteſtation, avoiding the places and occaſions of theſe ſins. For it is a vain thing to think thy ſelf ſtrong enough to abſtain from any ſin, when thou canſt not withdraw thy ſelf from the occaſions thereof.

Ah ſinner, if thou haſt any regard to thy precious ſoul, it will be thy wiſdome ſpeedily to reſolve to leave thine old courſe of life, and to turn over a new leaf. Think not of peace with God, whileſt thou art at peace with ſin. Think not that thy old ſcores are croſſed, whileſt thou art ſo freely ſcoring up a new. Deceive not thy ſelf, thy divorce from ſin, and thy marriage with Chriſt muſt be both on the ſame day. And count not thy ſelf divorced, till thou and thy ſins be parted. Reſolve this day to have done with thy old wayes for ever. At once give Chriſt his welcome, and thy luſts their farewel. There is no true humiliation for ſin, where there is not a reſolution againſt it. Say not thou art not humbled enough, how little ſoever thy ſorrow be, if thou art ſincerely reſolved againſt iniquity. And ſay not thou art humble enough, how deep ſoever it hath been, if there follow not this reſolution. Thy Furnace hath not yet been hot enough. if thy ſin be not too hot for thee. Reſolve for Chriſt, reſolve againſt the Devil, and all his works.

works. And that thy resolutions may hold, observe these following directions.

1. *Be sure thou do not ground thy resolutions upon any confidence in thine own strength, but in the strength of Jesus Christ:* without whose assistance thou canst do nothing, But through Christ strengthening thee, thou wilt be enabled to do any thing. As *David* therefore when he was to encounter with *Goliah*, went not out in his own name but *in the name and strength of the Lord of Hosts.* 1 Sam. 17.45. So must thou resolve to fight against thy lusts and corruptions, not in thine own name or strength, but in the name and strength of Jesus Christ. And know that the more sensible thou art of thine own weakness, and insufficiency, the more ready Christ is to help thee, and the more strength shall thou recieve from Christ. Which the Apostle *Paul* found true in his own experience, for saith he, 2 *Cor.* 12. 10. *When I am weak, then am I strong,* that is, when I am weak, and insufficient in my self, in mine own apprehension, then I do most of all feel a gracious supply from Christ.

2, *Back thy resolutions with prayer.* As thou dost resolve in the grace and strength of God to abandon thy lusts, to forsake thy former wicked and ungodly course of life: so be earnest with God in prayer for power and strength against the power and strength of sin. For as it is Gods power by which alone thou canst keep down the power of thy lusts; so prayer is the means sanctified for the obtaining thereof. Oh therefore pray, and pray earnestly, yea add fasting to thy prayers. For old sins to which thou hast been long accustomed, are like those Devils which possessed the man from his youth, which could not be cast out without fasting and prayer,

3. *Second thy Prayers with thy diligence and faithful endeavours, striving against thy lusts and corruptions, though never so sweet and dear unto thee.* For those are vain and insignificant resolutions which promise great matters, but do nothing. Whereas true resolutions are active and stirring, putting men upon the work. Hast thou resolved, through the grace of God, to abandon thy lusts? up then and be doing, set on it presently without any far-

farther delay. For ſhouldſt thou conſecrate the prime and ſtrength of thy dayes to the ſervice of Satan, and gratifying thine own carnal luſts, and reſerve thy decayed ſtrength, and decrepid old age, the dregs of dayes, for God and his ſervice? Canſt thou think God will accept thereof? Surely no. For mark what the Prophet *Malachy* ſpeaketh, *Curſed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and ſacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing.* What then can they expect who dedicate the prime and ſtrength of their dayes to ſin, and reſerve only the lees, their old age, full of ſores and corruption, unto God?

4. *Frequently call to mind the reſolutions thou haſt made of a ſpeedy and through reformation*, which will be an eſpecial means to keep them freſh in memory, and a freſh remembrance of them will ſtir thee up to a conſcionable performance of them.

5. *Often renew thy reſolutions.* It is not ſufficient frequently to *review thy reſoultions*, but thou muſt likewiſe frequently *renew them.* For a reſolution renewed is as new made, and thereby becometh freſh and vigorous. And truly there is great power in a reſolution, when it is freſh upon the heart; new cords are ſtrong.

V. *Having reſolved to give a bill of divorce to thy ſinful luſts and pleaſures, make choice of Chriſt for thy Lord and Husband, as well as for thy Prieſt and Saviour.* Take him as the *Bride* doth her *Bridegroome* for better for worſe, for richer and poorer, with his croſs as well as with his Crown, reſign and give up thy ſelf unto Chriſt, to be ruled and governed, ordered and diſpoſed in all things by him: and reſolve as to caſt thy ſelf at the feet of Chriſt in ſubjection to him, ſo to caſt thy ſelf into the arms of Chriſt, and upon his ſhoulders for Salvation from him: adventure thy ſoul upon him, reſt upon his perfect righteouſneſs, and all-ſufficient Sacrifice for the pardon of thy ſins here, and for eternal life and Salvation hereafter.

Let the conſideration of thoſe many melting invitations of Jeſus Chriſt unto poor ſinners to come unto him, ſtir thee up to go unto him, to caſt thy ſelf into the merciful and meritorious arms and embracements of thy

Crucified Saviour, to throw thy ſelf upon his grace and mercy. As God hath laid thy *help* upon him, ſo do thou lay thy *hope* upon him, both for the pardon of thy ſins paſt, and for power againſt ſin for the time to come: for grace here, and glory hereafter, ſaying, *If I periſh, I will periſh in the arms of Jeſus Chriſt.* And if thou canſt bring up thine heart to this, then is the match made between Chriſt and thy ſoul; ſo that thou maiſt with confidence ſay, *Chriſt is mine, and I am his.*

And oh what a joyful day will this be unto thee? In this conſiſteth thy new birth, and work of Regeneration, whereby thou art become a new creature. This day is ſalvation come into thy heart: All other things are but preparatives unto this.

Oh therefore let me prevail with thee, above all things to make this choice of Chriſt for thy Lord and Saviour: to reſign up thy ſelf unto him, and his Laws, as well as to expect ſalvation from him. For no man can take Jeſus Chriſt ſavingly, who takes him not wholly as *his Lord and husband*, to ſerve and obey him, as well as *his Prieſt and Saviour* to free him from the guilt and puniſhment of all his ſins. *He is the author of eternal Salvation only to thoſe who obey him.*

Many, I know, are willing to accept of Chriſt upon their own terms. Some are willing to accept of Chriſt, provided that together with him, they may enjoy their ſinfull luſts and pleaſures. Others are willing to accept of of him, provided that together with him, they may enjoy their worldly riches and treaſures. But he, who will take Chriſt ſavingly, muſt take him upon his own terms. He will be all to thee, or nothing: he will rule thee, or elſe he will not ranſome thee. Away then with thy ſins, be divorced from thine old Husband, let ſin no longer rule in thee, if thou wilt be marryed to the Lord, and have any part in his righteouſneſs.

Ah ſinner, whoſoever thou art, how many ſoever thy ſins are, this day in the name of the great God, I do tender Jeſus Chriſt unto thee. And as thou tendereſt the life and happineſs of thine own ſoul, refuſe him not, but ſtir up thy ſelf to accept of him, both his perſon and in all his offices. Say, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall be

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my *Prophet*, I will in all things labour to be taught and instructed by him. And he shall be my *King*, I will give him the Supremacy, I will resign up my self wholly to his Dominion, in all things to be ordered and governed by him. And he shall be my *Priest*, he shall answer to God, and make an attonement for me: I will rest upon his perfect righteousness, and all-sufficient Sacrifice offered upon the Cross for life and salvation.

Though thou hast hitherto been a great sinner, yet if now thou wilt abandon thy sins, and thus embrace Jesus Christ, thou shalt have him given to thee, and all thy sins freely forgiven thee. Oh why wilt thou neglect so great salvation? Oh do not defer the doing it one day longer. But to day, even now that Christ is freely offered unto thee, resolve to receive him.

And be not discouraged out of fear, that because thou hast so long refused to choose and embrace Jesus Christ, therefore now the time is past. But know that so long as the Lord continueth calling, and inviting thee by his Word and Spirit, so long the day of grace lasteth. The golden Scepter is this day held forth unto thee: Christ and Salvation are now offered unto thee: O therefore embrace him by faith; which if thou refusest to do, know assuredly that everlasting fire prepared for the Devils, will be thy portion to all Eternity. For as our Saviour speaketh, Joh. 3. 19. *This is the condemnation*, even the sorest and surest condemnation, *that light is come into the World*, that Jesus Christ, and salvation by him is offered in the Gospel, *and yet men love darkness more than light*, preferring their deeds of darkness, their sinful sensual wayes before the Lord of life, who is the light of the World. Oh that any should be so foolish and unwise, as to choose darkness rather then light, and death rather then life.

VI. *Ingage thy self by an express and solemn Covenant unto God, to abandon thy former sins, and sinful course of life; and to serve him in holyness and newness of life, all the remaining part of thy dayes.*

There is a two-fold covenanting with God.

1. One is chiefly in and with the Heart, which consist-

th in a ſincere cloſing with God in Chriſt, and ſur rendring up our ſelves unto him, to be his faithful Servants.

2. The other is expreſſed by the tongue and writing, when a man by words of writing doth expreſs his Covenant with God, ingaging himſelf as to give a Bill of Divorce to his former luſts, ſo to give up himſelf to God in Chriſt, to live in an holy conformity to his will.

Now it is this latter way of expreſs and ſolemn covenanting that I would commend unto you.

God in the Covenant he makes with us, promiſeth expreſly to be our God, and to take us for his people, ſaying, *I will be your God, and you ſhall be my people.* Muſt it not then needs be our duty to make an expreſs Covenant with God, promiſing to take him for our God, and to ingage our ſelves to be his faithful people: And certainly it cannot but be our duty to do that by our ſelves at age, which we did by our Parents at our Baptiſme. For though then we were entred into the Covenant of God by our Parents, yet their conſent and Dedication will ſerve our turn no longer then till we come to age, and natural capacity to conſent and Covenant for our ſelves. So that our firſt Baptiſmal Dedication, without our own actual conſent, and perſonal Dedication of our ſelves to God in Chriſt, will avail us little. I grant indeed, that this explicite ingaging our ſelves to God, in expreſs words or writing, is not abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation. For if any perſon cloſe intirely and ſincerely with God, his ſtate is thereby ſafe, although he doth not thus expreſs himſelf. But yet this expreſs and perſonal Covenanting with God before mentioned may be of ſingular uſe to a Chriſtian, to mind him of, and quicken him to duty, and eſtabliſh him in the wayes of God, and cauſe him to be more watchful, and ſtrengthen him againſt temptation, and by all to raiſe to himſelf a foundation of true and ſolid peace and comfort.

For your better Direction therein, I ſhall briefly ſhew you;

1. *What is to be done before you make this Covenant.*
2. *How it ought to be performed.*
3. *What duties are required of you after the performance of it.*

I. For

1. For the firſt, what is to be done before you make this Covenant, *Study well the Terms and Conditions of your Covenant*, examine your own hearts, whether you find a willingneſs in your ſelves to renounce and forſake your former ſins, and ſinful courſe of life, and to ſet upon a new courſe, to turn over a new leaf, to be more conſcionable in the diſcharge of the duties of your places, callings, and relations. Search your ſelves, whether you are willing to receive Chriſt in all his Offices, not only as your *Prieſt* to be ſaved by him, but likewiſe as your *Prophet* to be taught and inſtructed by him, yea, as your *Lord and King* to be Ruled and Governed by him. Whether you can lay your ſelves at the feet of Chriſt, and be content to run all hazards with him, to take up your croſs and deny your deareſt luſt, and whatſoever ſtands in competition with him.

II. For the *Manner*, How this duty ought to be performed.

1. *Be earneſt with God in Prayer*, that he would prepare your heart for ſuch a ſolemn buſineſs, by giving you ſuitable affections thereunto; and that he would graciouſly accept both your perſon and your ſervice, and by his holy Spirit ſtrengthen and aſſiſt you in the performance thereof.

2. *You muſt Covenant abſolutely without any ſecret exception or reſervation.* Too too many Chriſtians herein exceedingly deceive their own ſouls; they will promiſe to abandon the ſervice of the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh, and to reſign up themſelves to God and his ſervice, but it muſt be with this *Proviſo*, that they may be indulged in ſuch a beloved luſt, or to live in the practice of ſuch a profitable ſin, ſay with *Naaman*, *Herein the Lord be merciful unto thy Servant*, whereby they plainly diſcover the hypocriſie of their hearts.

3. *It muſt be done in Sincerity and uprightneſs of heart.* That which the Beloved Diſciple *John* ſaith of *Love*, 1 Joh. 3.18. *Let us not love in word only, and in tongue, but in deed, and in truth.* The ſame may I ſay concerning this preſent work, *Let us not Covenant in words only with our tongue, but as in deed, ſo in truth*; that is, ſincerely from the heart, leaſt otherwiſe we take the name of God in vain. If

a man ought to be cordial in any thing, ſurely then in this ſolemn Tranſaction with God, who is *the ſearcher of all hearts*, and knows not only the thoughts and imaginations of our hearts, but alſo the ends and aims, the intentions and purpoſes of our hearts in all our actions.

4. *Make thy Covenant under the condition of Gods help and aſſiſtance*, it being He only, *who makes us able, as to will, ſo to do, of his good pleaſure*, Phil. 2. 13. And therefore make thy Covenant with confidence on the aſſiſtance of Gods ſpirit to enable thee to keep it, ſuſpecting thine own weakneſs. *Peters* purpoſe was queſtionleſs ſincere, and his reſolution good, but ſelf-confidence was his fault; he preſumed too much upon his own ſtrength, which that he might the better diſcern, he was left to himſelf. Vow therefore, and Covenant in the Name of God, and thou wilt find ability to perform it.

5. *Write the Covenant with thine own hand*, and then read it over again, and again, that thou maiſt throughly underſtand the matter, and terms thereof, and thereupon give thine unfeigned aſſent and conſent thereunto.

6. Set upon the work with all poſſible ſeriouſneſs, as being a buſineſs of the greateſt importance, upon which thine eternal life and ſalvation dependeth: and therefore ſet thy ſelf as in the preſence of God, call up the moſt earneſt of thy thoughts, rouſe up all the powers of thy ſoul, and command them to the work; and then upon thy knees make thy Covenant with God, in theſe, or the like words.

BLeſſed God! Thou art the onely, true, and living God, who haſt made all things, and man in a more ſpecial manner for thy ſelf: And when by his wilful tranſgreſſing thy Covenant he had thrown himſelf into a ſtate of ſin and miſery, wherein no eye pitied him, then waſt thou pleas'd to compaſſionate his caſe, and again to redeem him to thy ſelf by the precious blood of thine onely begot-

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ten Son Jeſus Chriſt. I am therefore thine, O God, by more than a ſingle title: Thine, both as made, and redeemed by thee; and therefore ought to have given up my ſelf intirely, to have loved and ſerv'd thee, with all my heart, and with all my ſoul, and with all my ſtrength. But wretch that I am! I have willingly ſuffered other Lords to have Dominion over me. How hath this preſent evil world, and the things here below taken up and poſſeſſed my ſoul! How have the luſts of the fleſh, and the intereſt of this carnal life commanded all mine affections! and how hath Satan taken me Captive at his will! I have not reſiſted, but oft complyed with his temptations.

But now Lord, being by thy good Spirit convinced of the evil and folly of my ways, I deſire ſeriouſly, and from my heart, to acquit and abandon all theſe ſtrange Lords, to whom I have hitherto yielded my ſelf in ſubjection! and return to thee, O Lord, as the only fountain of being, and happineſs. And as I am already thine by all manner of right and title, ſo alſo now to become intirely thine by my own actual choice, and conſecration of my ſelf unto thee.

I do therefore now here in thy preſence, ſolemnly, and in the ſimplicity of my ſoul, renounce this vain and wicked world, with all the luſts, and carnal intereſts of the fleſh; the Devil and all his works, which Jeſus Chriſt came to deſtroy. And wholly, and without reſerve, I give up and didicate my ſelf to thee, O God, Father, Son, and Spirit, in whoſe Name I have been Baptized. Thou Lord art my Creator, and I here ingage my ſelf to own thee as my only Sovereign, to live in all ſubjection to thee, and to be entirely at thy diſpoſal, and to take thee for my only God and Portion.

I do here alſo accept of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, as my onely Mediator, by whom I am to be ſaved. I now receive him in all his Offices, and for all thoſe ends and purpoſes for which the Father hath appointed him: not onely as a *Prieſt* to ſatisfie and intercede for the remiſſion of my ſins; but as the *Shepherd* and *Biſhop* of Souls, the great *Prophet*, whom I am to hear in all things that he ſhall ſay unto me: and as my *Lord* and *King* to ſubmit to his Laws and Government, that he alone may rule in my heart, and ſubdue my luſts, and fulfill in me all the good purpoſes of his will.

And to thee, Holy Spirit, I here reſign my ſelf, and to thy onely conduct, to ſanctifie, guide, and comfort me; not willingly any more to quench or reſiſt any of thy ſacred motions.

To all this, I do here in thy preſence, O God, (who ſearcheſt the heart, and knoweſt what is in man) willingly ſubſcribe my Name, as a witneſs againſt my ſelf, if ever I prove falſe in my Covenant; humbly begging the aid and aſſiſtance of thy Grace, that I may be ſtedfaſt and faithful therein, conſcientciouſly doing, and performing it unto the end.

Lord, ſearch me, and try my heart, and if there be any falſe way in me, diſcover it to me, that I may not be condemned with the Hypocrites, but be upright, and without guile, and in the great day be found blameleſs, and unreprovable in thy ſight. *Amen, Amen.*

III. The Duties required of us after our ſolemn covenanting with God, are briefly theſe.

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1. *Having thus in truth and ſincerity, with all poſſible reverence and ſerioufneſs made thy Covenant with God, ſet thy hand thereunto*; and then lay it up ſafe amongſt thy choiceſt things, that it may be a ſtanding Memorial of thy ſolemn ingagement unto God, often looking thereunto.

2. *Make conſcience of performing thy Covenant.* Having ingaged thy ſelf to renounce and abandon thy former luſts, and ſinful courſes, ſtand not Dallying with them, but ſpeedily reject them with deteſtation. If wicked Companions have had too much of thy converſe and intimacy; now break off ſociety with them. If thou haſt lived in the omiſſion of any known duty, as of Secret, and Family-Prayer, of reading the Scripture, or the like, now ſet upon the practice of them, and be ſure thou perform them in a ſerious and ſpiritual manner, ſerving God in Spirit and Truth. Hereby wilt thou have a comfortable evidence that thou haſt in Truth renounced the Devil, the World, and the ſinful deſires of the Fleſh; and haſt devoted and given up thy ſelf to be the Lords in ſincerity. For then is the reſignation of our ſelves unto God done in truth, when it doth ingage us preſently to the performance of what we have vowed and covenanted.

3. *Oft call to mind thy Solemn Covenant made to God*, eſpecially when thou art preſent at others Baptiſme, and at the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; frequent meditation thereof is a ſpecial means to keep it freſh in memory; and a freſh remembrance of it will put life into thy Conſcience, and ſtir thee up to a conſcionable performance thereof.

4. *When thou art tempted to any ſin, bring that ſin to the touchſtone of thy Covenant, and ſearch whether it be not againſt it.* This will be a ſpecial means to make thee oft to think of thy Covenant, and to be more careful in keeping it, and in reſiſting temptations againſt it.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

VI. *WIth patience wait upon Christ in the use of his Ordinances,* especially the *Word* and *Prayer.*

1. *Frequent the Ministry of the Word, where the Spirit of God useth to breath.* The Spirit is the principal worker of this great work, as our Saviour expresseth, Joh. 3. 5, 6. And the Ministry of the Word is the ordinary Means and instrument, which the spirit of God useth for the effecting hereof. The Spirit of God breaths not in an *Alehouse*, or in a *Tavern*, or *Play-house*; but in the Ministry of the word. Whereupon the Apostle *Paul* calls it, Phil. 2. 16. *The Word of life*, by which our souls are quickned: And the Apostle *Peter*, *the seed of Regeneration*, by which we are new born, 1 Pet. 1. 23. Attend therefore unto the Ministry of the Word as the Ordinance of God, unto which his blessing is promised; use it in obedience to his command, in hope of his blessing, and with desire to profit thereby.

And for thine encouragement know, that *as dead a soul as thine* hath been quickned by the spirit of God, as it hath been attending upon the Ministry of the Word: *as hard an heart as thine* hath been softned: as *prophane an heart* hath been sanctified: *as carnal and corrupt an heart* hath been changed and renewed. And who knoweth, but while thou art attending upon God in his way, his spirit may breath upon thee, and so quicken thy dead heart, mollifie thine heard heart, sanctifie thy prophane heart, yea renew and change thy totally corrupted and carnal heart, wherein consisteth the work of Regeneration.

This I press upon all, knowing that a carnal, unregenerate man may give outward attendance unto the Ministry of the Word. Though thou art spiritually dead, yet hast thou *feet* to carry thee to the house of God, and *ears* to hear the outward Ministry of the World, and understanding to know in great measure what is said, Thou maist come to the Pool, and lye by it, though thou canst not put thy selfin. And truly it is good lying in the way where Christ useth to come. Oh

Oh therefore frequent the Miniſtry of the Word, where the Spirit of Chriſt uſeth to move, yea and to breath a ſpirit of life into dead ſouls. Take all occaſions of hearing the Word both in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon. Let nothing but neceſſity keep thee at home; for thou knoweſt not what Sermon may be moſt ſuitable to thy condition. And when thou heareſt, attend to it, as to a meſſage ſent from God concerning thine everlaſting ſalvation. And be often calling it to remembrance, whereby it will take the deeper impreſſion upon thine heart. And though for the preſent thou find not that benefit thou expecteſt, yet wait ſtill upon the Ordinance. The *lame man*, who lay long at the Pool of *Bethesda*, at laſt was cured.

2. *Be much in reading the Word of God, and ſuch practical books as may help thee in underſtanding and applying it.* This muſt not thruſt out Preaching, yet is it an excellent means of grace in its own time and place, as very many have found by their own experience. For as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaketh, *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul*, Pſal. 19. 7.

Luther confeſſeth of himſelf, that he was changed and renewed upon reading the Scriptures; and therefore profeſſed he would not part with one leaf of the Bible for all the World. For in the Scriptures there is a clear revelation of the way and means of Salvation by Jeſus Chriſt; therein is contained the Covenant of grace, and the Laws of Heaven according to which we muſt ſquare all our actions.

Oh ſinner, as thou deſireſt to partake of the new birth, and to be made partaker of the grace of God, be careful and conſcionable in reading the Scriptures. Spend not that time in reading of play-books and unprofitable pamphlets, which thou mighteſt ſpend in reading the Word, which is able to make thee wiſe unto Salvation: to this end carry it about thee as *Alexander* did *Homers Iliads for his fellow and companion in the Wars.* Oh that every one of us were ambitious of that commendation which *Euſebius* gives of St. *Origen, That he could repeat all the Scriptures at his fingers ends. Hiſtor. Eccleſ. lib. 6. Cap. 2.*

3. *Pray*

3. *Pray unto God for the change of thine heart*; beg of him that he would be pleaſed by his ſpirit to regenerate thee, to plant his image in thy ſoul, that thou maiſt become a *new-creature*. What the Apoſtle *James* ſaith of *wiſdom*, Jam. 1.5. is true of all *grace*, *if any one lack it, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him.*

Oh therefore beſeech him to open thine eyes, and ſhew thee how ſad and deplorable thy condition is, ſo long as thou continueſt in the ſtate of unregeneracy, that thou maiſt be truly ſenſible thereof; that he would ſhew thee the excellency and neceſſity of a new birth, that thine heart may be raiſed up in ſome earneſt longing deſires after the ſame: that he would vouchſafe unto thee his Holy Spirit, which may quicken thy dead ſoul, and renew it after the Image of God, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. And in thy prayers plead the promiſe of God, *to give his Spirit to thoſe who ask him.* That thy Prayer for a new birth may the better ſpeed;

1. *Be earneſt therein.* Pray with all thine heart, and with all thy might with the higheſt intention of affection. If thou wouldſt be a prevailing *Iſrael*, thou muſt be a wraſtling *Jacob*; wraſtle with God in prayer; for it is the fervent prayer only that is effectual.

2. *Be unceſſant in thy Prayers, as one that will take no nay, nor give over till thou find the work wrought in thy ſoul.* Be as importunate with God, as the Widdow was with the unjuſt Judge. For God loveth importunity. If the unjuſt Judge was overcome with importunity, how much rather will the righteous God, who is compaſſionately affected towards thoſe who ſeek unto him. Reſolve with *Jacob, I will not let thee go except thou bleſs me.* Lord help me, Lord break me, humble me, change and turn me: I cannot turn my ſelf, Miniſters cannot, Ordinances cannot, afflictions cannot turn me. If thou wilt, thou canſt: turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned, draw thou me, and I will run after thee. O ſuffer thy ſelf this once to be overcome by a poor worm: I cannot be denyed: I dye, I am undone, if thou deny me. Lord hear, Lord turn me.

Obj. But ſome are apt to object and ſay, how can I pray without the Spirit?

A. Put thy ſelf upon the duty of prayer, and who knoweth, but thou maiſt ſoon feel and find the aſſiſtance of Gods ſpirit in the performance, though thou findeſt it not in the entrance of the duty. Go therefore unto God in prayer, ſpread before him thy wretched, miſerable ſtate and condition, plead thy miſerable neceſſity, the dreadfulneſs of thy preſent ſtate, how much better it had been that thou hadſt never been born, than not to be born again. And then waiting for the aſſiſtance of the Spirit, be earneſt and importunate with God, that he would not let thee live a day longer in thine Unregenerate ſtate, leaſt death ſhould find thee therein, and then thou periſh everlaſtingly.

Obj. Some I know do queſtion whether carnal and unregenerate men may be put upon that duty of prayer, becauſe the Scripture ſaith, Prov. 15.8. that *the Sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord*, and that *God heareth not ſinners.*

A. 1. The Scriptures give us warrant to preſs carnal and unregenerate men upon the duty of Prayer. For at the time when *Peter* told *Simon Magus* that *he was in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bond of iniquity*, then he preſſed him to pray unto God, ſaying, *Repent of thy wickedneſs, and pray unto God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*, Act. 8.22.

2. We do not exhort men to pray and ſtill hold themſelves reſolved to continue in their wicked and ungodly courſes; ſuch prayer indeed would be an abomination: but to reſolve upon turning, and ſo to go unto the Lord for his grace to aſſiſt and accept them. And therefore ſaith *Peter* to *Simon Magus*, *Repent of this thy wickedneſs, and ſo pray for pardon.*

And to thine own Prayers call in the help of other mens prayers, beg of them that in their Prayers they would be mindful of thee, and of thy condition; that they would be earneſt with God on thy behalf, that he would make thee a new creature, by endowing theee with true, ſaving, ſanctifying graces. The *Jaylors* Converſion is ſet down as the Conſequent of the Apoſtles Prayers. Not only their deliverance out of *his priſon*, but his deliverance out of the *Devils priſon*, is ſet down as a fruit of their prayers. To thine own prayers therefore call in the help of other mens Prayers.

VIII. *When either in hearing, reading, praying, or at any other time thou feeleſt any motions of Gods ſpirit in thy ſoul and conſcience, make much of them, ſurrender up thy ſelf thereunto; preſently turn thoſe motions into reſolutions, and thoſe reſolutions into endeavours.* Let not the motions of Gods Spirit be nipped in the bud, but nouriſh and cheriſh them, that they may bring forth good fruit. Are they motions tending to the working in thee a loathing and abhorring of thy former ſinful luſts? ſecond thoſe motions with ſtrong reſolutions to leave and forſake them for the time to come, at leaſt ſo to ſtrive againſt them, as they may not rule & reign in thee, as formerly they have done Are they motions tending to the ſtirring thee up to any good duty omitted? oh turn theſe motions into performances, and preſently fall upon the practice of thoſe duties, whether it be praying in thy cloſet, or in thy Family, or ſuch like.

Doth the Spirit of God beam any light from the Word into thine underſtanding, whereby thou art more throughly convinced of thy miſerable condition by nature, of the excellency of the new birth, of the neceſſity thereof unto Salvation? Labour to improve this light to the ſtirring up in thee an earneſt, longing deſire after the work of Regeneration. Hath the Spirit of God in a Sermon ſo convinced thee of ſome groſs, ſcandalous ſin, or ſins, that thou art pricked at the heart, and deeply humbled under the ſenſe and apprehenſion of them? oh content not thy ſelf with ſome ſudden pangs of affection; but forthwith go into ſome ſecret place, and there take the advantage of thy preſent relenting frame of heart, for the more free and full confeſſing of thy ſins unto God, and ingaging thy ſelf by a ſolemn covenant unto him to be more watchfull over thy ſelf, as againſt thy former leud and wicked courſes, ſo againſt the occaſions leading thereunto.

Ah ſinner, it will be thy Wiſdom carefully to obſerve, and diligently to improve all the motions and ſtirrings of Gods Spirit in thy Soul and Conſcience, by ſeconding the work of this holy Spirit in thee. Loſe not the Wind and Tide, the Wind may lye, the Tide may turn, and where art thou then? 'twill be hard Rowing againſt Wind or Tide.

Tide. Thou little thinkeſt what advantage ſuch motions wiſely improved may be to thy ſoul: and what prejudice the ſlighting, and neglecting of them may be unto thee: for ought thou knoweſt, thine eternal happineſs or miſery may depend upon the improving or ſlighting the ſame.

XI. *Be much in the company of the godly, walk with them who walk with God.* He that walketh with the wiſe, ſhall be more wiſe: he that walketh with the humble, ſhall be more humble: he that walketh with the holy, ſhall learn holineſs. As there is no greater *hinderance* to the work of Chriſt, than the ſociety of the wicked; So there is no greater *furtherance* to it, than the ſociety of thoſe who fear God. For there is none will be ſo ready to pitty and compaſſionate you, to counſel and direct you in the way to Heaven, as theſe: none ſo ready to provoke and egg you on unto godlineſs, to encourage and cheer you up when you do well, and to reprove you when you do amiſs, as theſe: none ſo ready to communicate their experiences to you, *O come, ſay they, and we will tell you what the Lord hath done for our ſouls.* So that in the company of the godly there is much good to be got; they being like Lanthorns which diſperſe their light round about.

Oh Chriſtians, encourage poor ſinners to come among you; let your diſcourſes be practical Sermons; let your ways be living copies of that holy doctrine which you have received; let your converſation be full of love, life, pitty, compaſſion towards them, be ready to teach, counſel, encourage and help them on after the Lord. Teach not ſinners to ſay (by the barrenneſs, and unſavouriness of your lives) *there is no more of God to be gotten in the dwellings of the Righteous, than in the tents of Wickedneſs.*

Thus have I ſhewed you the Means on our part to be performed for the furthering the new birth, and the work of Regeneration in your ſouls And now give me leave to propound one Queſtion to you. *Are you reſolved with the grace and aſſiſtance of God, ſpeedily to put your ſelves upon the practice of theſe Directions, or no?* If you think theſe thing more than neceſſary, and are ready to ſay, What need ſo much ado, as if without ſo much hearing, ſo much reading

ing, ſo much praying, and the like, there were no hope of Regeneration, and Salvation! you may then ſit down and take your eaſe. But know for certain, that without a conſcionable uſe of theſe Means, you are like to fall ſhort, as of Regeneration here, ſo of Salvation hereafter. For where God hath appointed Means, he doth not ordinarily work without them; and therefore if you will not uſe *Gods Means*, no wonder if you go without *his grace*.

I beſeech you, for the ſake of your precious ſouls, do not wilfully refuſe to be happy, do not wittingly plunge your ſouls into everlaſting miſeries. Be willing to be happy, awaken your ſleepy, ſtir up your lazy hearts to be doing. Heaven is not gotten with a wiſh, everlaſting glory is worthy your utmoſt pains, and will not be gotten without it.

What ſay you, after all that hath been ſaid? Are you willing to be converted? to become new men, and to take up a new courſe? If you are not yet, when will you? Are you content to dye in your preſent ſtate? If you were now breathing out your laſt, and juſt paſſing into another World, would you not wiſh you had hearkened to counſel? Though thou wilt live the life, yet art thou content to dye the death of the obſtinate and hardened? Be not Bruits, and mad men. If Chriſt be beſt at death; if holineſs will be beſt at laſt; if you know and believe, that when you come to dye, you ſhall wiſh you had made Chriſt ſure: then ſure your ſtanding out againſt Chriſt now, your refuſing grace now, is the firſt-born of follies. O be wiſe, conſider what's before you; *Chriſt* and the *World*, *holineſs* and *ſin*, *life* and *death*, chooſe now for your ſelves; and if you will be adviſed, let your *this dayes choice* be the ſame, which you are reſolved ſhall be your *dying choice*. If you would not chooſe to dye in your ſins, to dye Drunkards, to dye adulterers, to dye Scoffers, to dye unbelievers, live not out this day in ſuch a dreadful ſtate.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Several Objections of Carnal and Unregenerate Men against the uſe of the forementioned Means, Anſwered.

HAving ſhewed the *Means*, I come now to *Anſwer the Objections*, which many carnal men pretend againſt the uſe of them, in order to a new birth.

Obj. 1. Some are ready to object and ſay, Theſe are indeed likely means, but they find neither ſtrength, nor ability to ſet upon the practice of them.

A. 1. *I would ask thee, whether thou canſt in truth ſay, thou haſt not been wanting to thy ſelf in ſuch things as were within thy power and ſtrength?* Haſt thou not as much power to go into the Houſe of God, as into an Alehouſe? to read the holy Scriptures, as Play-books and Pamphlets? to aſſociate thy ſelf with the Godly, as with the Wicked and Prophane? Canſt not thou take up a reſolution, to abandon thine old ſinful luſts, and to ſet upon a new courſe of life? Certainly if thou haſt been wanting to thy ſelf in theſe and ſuch like things, this objection, taken from thine own inability, is but an idle excuſe; and argues rather thine unwillingneſs, than diſability: and know that in the laſt and great day, thou wilt be damned, not ſo much for thy want of power, as for thy want of will.

2. *If thou wilt but put thy ſelf upon the uſe of Means, thou doſt not know what ſtrength thou mayſt receive from God, and what may be the iſſue thereof. While* Peter *was Preaching, the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them that heard the Word*, Act. 10. 44 And for ought thou knoweſt, whileſt thou art attending upon the Miniſtry of the Word, or praying unto God, the Holy Ghoſt may fall on thee, and make that Ordinance effectual for thy Regeneration and Salvation. And therefore put thy ſelf upon the uſe of Means: wait at the Pool; thou knoweſt not how ſoon the Spirit may come and move upon thy Soul. For God doth uſually meet with thoſe who ſeek him.

Obj. 2. I fear I am not Elected, and therefore conceive it altogether fruitleſs for me to labour in the uſe of any means for this new birth. Oh! could I be aſſured of my Election, then ſhould I with comfort and confidence labour after it.

A. 1. *Election is a ſecret thing, and belongeth unto God*; according to that of *Moſes*, *Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but things which are revealed belong unto us*, Deut. 29. 29. And therefore trouble not thy ſelf with Gods ſecret Will, but follow his revealed Will. Apply thy ſelf ſeriouſly and cordially to the uſe of the means God hath ſanctified for thy Regeneration; and from thence thou mayſt gain ſome comfortable Evidence of thine Election.

2. *Conſider, though it be the duty of every Chriſtian to give all diligence to make his Calling and Election ſure; yet no man can know, and be aſſured of his Election, till he be Regenerated by the Spirit of God:* therefore the not knowing thine Election ſhould be ſo far from keeping thee off from applying thy ſelf to the means of Regeneration, as it ſhould rather be an argument to preſs thee thereunto: for by thy Regeneration thou mayſt know thine Election. The Eternal Decrees of God are only made known *à poſteriori*, from their effects, one whereof is *Regeneration:* find this, and thou needeſt not doubt of thine Election.

3. Wilt thou not plow nor ſow, becauſe thou knoweſt not whether God hath determined thee an Harveſt? Thou wilt ſay, I am ſure I ſhall not reap, if I ſow not; there's hope of an Harveſt, if there be a Seed-time: and therefore I will adventure to ſow what ever the iſſue may be. And wilt thou not be as wiſe for thy ſoul, as for thy body? Becauſe thou art not ſure of thine Election, wilt thou make thy Damnation ſure?

Obj. 3. Ah! I am too unworthy to partake of ſo great a mercy: there is nothing in me to move God to work grace in me, and therefore why ſhould I trouble my ſelf about it?

A. 1. *Conſider Gods grace is every way ſo free, that the mercy which he vouchſafeth to any of his Creatures, is altogether of himſelf, and from himſelf.* He reſpecteth his own

own goodneſs, not our worthineſs, in the mercies which he conferreth. If none ſhall obtain grace but the worthy, who then can be ſaved?

2. *Conſider, that no man before his Regeneration could ever find any worthineſs in himſelf why he ſhould partake of that mercy.* What was there in *Manaſſeh*? or in *Zacheus*? or in *Mary Magdalen*? or in *Paul* before their Converſion? Surely none at all. Nay there is never a Child of God on Earth, or in Heaven, but had as much perſonal unworthineſs before his Regeneration, as thou now haſt. Why then doth the ſight and apprehenſion of thine unworthineſs put thee out of all hope of obtaining the ſame?

3. *Conſider, that the ſenſe of thine unworthineſs is ſome degree of worthineſs; yea, it is the greateſt worthineſs thou canſt attain unto.* And none ever found greater mercy from God, than they who have been moſt ſenſible of their unworthineſs. Inſtance the *Centurion*, who ſpeaking unto Chriſt, ſaid, Mat. 8. 8. *I am not worthy that thou ſhouldſt come under the roof of my houſe.* And yet Chriſt granted his deſire in healing his ſervant. So likewiſe the *Woman of Canaan*, who acknowledged her ſelf to be no better than a *Dog*, yet received this anſwer from Chriſt, *Oh Woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt*, Mat. 15. 27. So likewiſe the *Publican*, who was conſcious to himſelf of ſo much unworthineſs, that he ſtood afar off, and durſt not lift up his eyes unto Heaven, but ſmote upon his breaſt, ſaying, *God be merciful to me a ſinner.* Yet as the Text noteth, Luk. 18. 13. *He went away juſtified rather than the Phariſee*, who was puffed up with a conceit of his own righteouſneſs.

Obj. 4. Some object the number and the heinouſneſs of their ſins. Oh they are ſuch vile and wretched ſinners, having miſpent the beſt of their time, the ſtrength of their youth in the ſervice of ſin and Satan, and in gratifying their own carnal luſts and affections; and as they have grown in years, ſo they have grown in ſin and wickedneſs; and therefore cannot expect ſo great a mercy from God, as of a Son of *Belial* to be made a Son of *God*, by the work of Regeneration.

A. 1. *Know for thy comfort that God hath imbraced with*

the arms of his free grace, as great and heinous ſinners as thy ſelf. For haſt thou been an *Idolater*, or *Murderer*? ſo was *Manaſſeh*, yet was he received to mercy. Haſt thou been a *Blaſphemer*, or a *Perſecutor* of the Saints and Servants of God? ſo was *Paul*, and yet he obtained mercy. Haſt thou been a *filthy, unclean perſon*, wallowing and delighting, like a Sow, in the filth of ſin, and mire of ſinful filthineſs? ſo did *Mary Magdalen*, and many of the *Corinthians*, yet were they *waſhed with the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt, juſtified and ſanctified*, 1 Cor. 6. 11. Haſt thou been an *Oppreſſor an Extortioner*, who haſt got thine Eſtate by over-reaching thy Neighbours, and grinding the faces of the Poor? ſo did *Matthew* and *Zacheus*, who yet found mercy. Why then is there not hope of mercy for thee? when grace hath imbraced ſuch great and heinous ſinners.

Q. Wilt thou ſay, thou art a greater ſinner than any of theſe forementioned?

A. This is ſcarce credible. But ſuppoſe thy ſins do exceed the proportion of any one thou canſt find pardoned in Scripture! yet this were no juſt ground of deſpair: becauſe the depth of Gods Mercy was never yet fathomed; God never acted his Mercy ſo far, but he is able to act it farther: Greater ſinners than ever yet were pardoned, may be pardoned. And therefore though thy ſins were more and greater than the ſins of others, yet there is hope of mercy for thee, unleſs by thine infidelity thou doſt exclude thy ſelf from the ſame.

Obj. 5. Others object, they fear their time and day of grace is paſt and gone, having long ſtood out, and rejected many offers of grace, and that it is now too late to ſeek after the grace of God.

A. To this I anſwer, that the ſlighting and rejecting the many offers of grace, is very ſad, yea an heinous ſin, which calls for the deepeſt ſorrow and humiliation. This made our Saviour to weep over *Jeruſalem*, becauſe they neglected the day of their viſitation. But yet know,

1. Chriſt hath ſeveral ſeaſons of Converſion, and Regeneration; all come not in at the firſt hour of the day, nor at the ſixth hour; Chriſt brings home ſome to himſelf

ſelf in the latter end of their lives, who have all the former part ſlighted and rejected his gracious Invitations.

2. If thou art heartily ſorry for thy former refuſals, and doſt now unfeignedly deſire to cloſe with Chriſt, I may with confidence ſay, thy day of grace is not paſt. For thoſe affections wrought in thee by the Spirit of God are gracious hints that he intends thee good, if yet thou wilt accept.

3. Thou who feareſt thy day of grace is paſt, know this, that if thou now findeſt in thy ſelf a willingneſs to abandon thy former luſts and corruptions, and to become a new Creature; to caſt off the Devils ſervice, and to become the ſervant of the Lord Jeſus, thy day of grace is not paſt.

I ſpeak not theſe things to incourage any to defer, and put off their turning from their ſins to a farther day, upon a preſumption they ſhall have mercy at laſt, beware of that madneſs. Thou that wilt not to day, thy ſoul may be in Hell before to morrow. But I ſpeak this to incourage old ſinners to a ſpeedy turning. Old ſinner, it is the laſt time with thee, for ought thou knoweſt, thou art juſt come to thy *Now* or *Never*. And two things I would ſpeak to thee.

1. It's a great doubt, whether thou, who haſt ſtood it out ſo long, wilt come in now, fear and tremble; few, very few of thoſe that ſtand it out to the laſt hour, do come in at the laſt hour; yet,

2. If thou wilt thou mayſt; if in this thy day, thy laſt day, thou wilt come in, thou ſhalt be ſaved.

Obj. 6. If once I be Regenerate, and become a new Creature, I ſhall never live one merry day more: then farewel all delights and pleaſures; for the life of a godly man is full of uncomfortableneſs, and ſadneſs.

A. 1. True it is, every Regenerate man ought to renounce all ſinful delights, to bid adieu to all unlawful pleaſures; which in truth is no bondage, but rather a ſpiritual liberty. The *bondage* of a Chriſtian is in being a ſervant to his ſinful luſts; and his *liberty* in being delivered from them. The Apoſtle bewails the time when himſelf, and other Saints *were fooliſh, ſerving divers luſts*

and pleaſures, Tit. 3. 3. And reckons it amongſt the prime benefits they received by the grace of the Goſpel, to be delivered from that ſlavery and bondage.

2. Though every Regenerate man ought to renounce all ſinful pleaſures, and delights, yet he may in ſome meaſure enjoy any lawful pleaſures, which the Creature affords. Yea none doth or can enjoy the ſweetneſs of the Creature more, than the new Creature. For he hath not only a fleſhly palate like other men, whereby he reliſheth the carnal pleaſure which the Creature affordeth; but he hath likewiſe a ſpiritual palate whereby he taſteth the ſweetneſs and goodneſs of God in the Creature. So that this Objection is a meer ſlander, which the Devil and his Agents have raiſed to fright men from looking after grace.

3. The work of Regeneration is ſo far from depriving a man of all delights and pleaſures, that there are unſpeakable delights peculiar to the Regenerate: they have dainties which their ſpirits feed upon, that the World knows not of; *a ſtranger doth not intermeddle with their joy*, Prov. 14. 1. As they have higher and more noble Principles than other men; ſo they feed upon higher and more noble comforts: Their comforts are ſpiritual, adminiſtred unto their ſouls by a ſpecial work of the Holy Ghoſt, who is deſigned by the *Father* and the *Son* to be the *Comforter*, to chear and revive the ſpirits of his ſervants. And certainly the comforts and delights which he conveys into the ſouls of the Regenerate, muſt needs be ſoul-ſatisfying, and ſoul-raviſhing Conſolations. What Blaſphemy is it to affirm, that the Joys of the World are better than the Joys of God!

Oh how ſweet and delightful muſt it needs be to know, that we are brought out of the ſtate of Nature, into the ſtate of Grace! that we are the Children of God, beloved of him! the Members of Chriſt, and dear to him! that our ſins are pardoned in and through the merits of his bitter Death and Paſſion! and that ſo ſoon as our Earthly Tabernacles are diſſolved, we ſhall have a building of God, an Houſe not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens; and there reign with him in ever-

everlaſting bliſs and happineſs! Oh what a comfort muſt it needs be ſeriouſly to fix our thoughts on thoſe joys and pleaſures, which hereafter we ſhall enjoy at Gods right hand to all Eternity!

Ah ſinners, What folly then hath bewitched you to think it greatet pleaſure to live in fooliſh ſports, and fleſhly delights, than in the ſenſe of Gods love, and in the believing thoughts of glory? Did you but know the peace, and the comfort, the pleaſure, and the joy which ſpringeth from the apprehenſion of Gods love, and walking in the ways of holineſs, you would ſoon be of another mind, and take another courſe than you do. Much good may do you with your crackling thorns: walk in the light of your fires, and the ſparks which you have kindled; make the beſt of your preſent pleaſures, till that vanity and vexation, which is all you are like to reap from them, bring you to a better mind.

The new birth is the very beginning of a life of peace and comfort; and the greateſt pleaſantneſs is to be found in the ways of holineſs. Would you but make enquiry of thoſe who have tryed both ſtates, both that of ſin, and that of grace, they will tell you, that their firſt ſtate was a ſtate of trouble and miſery; and that they never found any true peace and comfort in their ſouls till they were brought home to God, and came to be acquainted with an holy life; Yea, that they have enjoyed more ſweetneſs and delight in one hours communion with God, than ever their fleſh brought them in in all their lives. *Solomon* who had experience of all other pleaſures, yet ſaith of the ways of godlineſs, *Prov.* 3. 17. *Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs*, even ſoul-ſatiſfying pleaſantneſs.

If you will not believe the reports of the people of God, yet hearken to what God himſelf ſpeaketh in his Word, Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3. *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God thorow our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: and not only ſo, but we glory in tribulation.* And ſaith S. *Peter*, *Believing ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. And the *Pſalmiſt* often calleth upon the righteous to rejoyce, *Rejoyce in the Lord ye righteous, and ſhout for joy all ye that are upright in heart*, Pſal.

97. 12. And ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rejoyce in the Lord always, and again I ſay rejoyce*, Phil. 4. 4. Will you believe God? this you ſee is his teſtimony, that true joy is proper to the Regenerate, the Children of God are the only Heirs of joy and glory.

Obj. 1. But ſome are ready to object and ſay, how can the ſtate of the Regenerate be ſo comfortable and joyful, when as none are more afflicted and perſecuted than they? *In the World* (ſaith our Saviour ſpeaking to his Diſciples, *Joh.* 16. 33.) *ye ſhall have tribulation.* And ſaith the Apoſtle, *All that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſecution*: which made *Luther* to ſay, a Chriſtian is a Croſs-bearer: *Qui non eſt crucianus, non eſt Chriſtianus*, Luther *in* Gen. 29.

A. 1. True it is, none are more afflicted and perſecuted than they; but their afflictions and perſecutions do not always deprive them of true ſpiritual joy and comfort. For ſaith the Apoſtle, Rom. 5. 1, 3. *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, and we rejoyce in tribulation.* And ſaith our Saviour, *When men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſly for my ſake, rejoyce and be exceeding glad*, Mat. 5. 11, 12.

2. Gods Children in and under great afflictions do oft-times feel and find the greateſt joy and comfort. *As their ſufferings abound, ſo their conſolation aboundeth in and through Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. When doth a Chriſtian ſtand in more need of the comforts of God, and when doth he enjoy more of them, then when outward comforts do moſt fail him? When *David* was ſorely diſtreſſed, being plundred of his Goods, and robbed of his Wives and Children, *he incouraged himſelf in the Lord his God*, and received much comfort from him, 1 *Sam.* 29. 6.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The ſecond Branch of the Uſe of Exhortation unto the Regenerate.

HAving done with the firſt Branch of the Uſe of Exhortation unto the Unregenerate; come we now unto the ſecond, which concerneth the Regenerate, and conſiſteth of divers Heads:

I. *Admire and adore Gods ſpecial mercy and goodneſs in thy Regeneration.* Let thine heart be raviſhed with the conſideration of his love to thee in Chriſt Jeſus, the bottom whereof cannot be fathomed by any Angel in Heaven: And therefore well mayſt thou cry out, *Oh the height, and the depth, the length and the breadth of the love of God unto thy ſoul!* If *David* upon the conſideration of the goodneſs of God to man in his Creation cryed out ſo affectionately, *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him?* Pſal. 8. 4. Surely upon the conſideration of Gods mercy unto thy ſoul in this work of new Creation, haſt thou not cauſe to ſay the like, *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him?* Lord, what am I among the ſons of men, that thou ſhouldeſt have reſpect to me? That the Lord ſhould pluck thee as a Brand out of the fire, that he ſhould take thee into his ſpecial grace and favour, when he left many millions of Men and Women to periſh in their ſins; that he ſhould make thee an Heir of Heaven, when he left ſo many to be Firebrands of Hell; that thy nature ſhould be renewed and ſanctified, when others are left in their filth and pollution; haſt not thou unſpeakable cauſe to ſit down and admire the freeneſs of Gods grace, and riches of his mercy towards thee? Surely nothing but free grace hath put this honour upon thee, and put ſuch a difference between thee and others. For what did God ſee more in thee than in others, to move him to ſet his ſpecial love on thee?

Oh

Oh caſt thine eyes round about thee, look upon thy Neighbours who live under the ſame Miniſtry, partake of the ſame Ordinances as thou doſt, and yet never felt the power and ſweetneſs of them in their ſouls. Let the abominable wickedneſs which thou daily ſeeſt in others, fill thee with wonder at the loving kindneſs of the Lord to thee: That the dew of his free grace ſhould fall upon thy ſoul, when the hearts of ſo many about thee ſhould be dry, not having one drop of that dew upon them; is not this a mercy to be admired? Oh conſider it, and adore it, and ſay, *Lord, how is it that thou ſhouldſt beſtow thy grace on me, and deny it to ſo many, who in many reſpects are better than I?*

That thy heart may be the more raiſed up in admiration of the mercy and goodneſs of God unto thee herein, take notice of the manifold *priviledges* which do follow and accompany ſuch as are Regenerated.

1. *The love and favour of God wherewith they are imbraced.* Love is weighty, and falleth downward from Father to Child: Yea, love in God is as a Fountain and Spring-head, and the Channel or Pipe in and through which it runneth, is Chriſt: now that Spring continually floweth forth through that Pipe to every Regenerate perſon. Obſerve the love of Earthly Parents to their Children, how great, how conſtant it is; withal conſider how far God exceeds them in his love, even as far as he doth in greatneſs, which is infinitely. So as every Regenerate perſon may with aſſurance reſt on the love of God his Father, which cannot be but moſt ſweet to the ſoul, and exceeding comfortable. For in Gods Fatherly favour conſiſteth our happineſs.

II. *Union with Chriſt.* For Chriſt is the *Head*, and by Regeneration we are his *Members*. The Apoſtle writing to the *Corinthians*, who were born again by the Spirit, ſaith, 1 Cor. 12. 22. *Now are ye the Body of Chriſt, and Members in particular*, meaning of the Myſtical Body of Chriſt. This Union of the Regenerate with Chriſt, is one of the great myſteries of our Chriſtian Faith: and it is a myſtery of an unſpeakable comfort and conſolation: For by vertue of our Union with Chriſt, *God is our Father*; *Chriſt is our Brother, and our Husband*

Husband and Head; Heaven is our Inheritance; Angels are our Attendants and Guardians, who are sent forth to minister for them, who shall be Heirs of Salvation. These Angels are those *Horses and Chariots of Fire* which were round about *Elisha*; and which are also round about every Member of Christ in all their dangers, though they see them not. If the eyes of the Regenerate were but opened to see their glorious Attendants, how would their hearts be comforted and cheared in all their distresses.

III. *Adoption.* Such as are Regenerated are thereby the *adopted Sons of God.* Whereas by natural propagation they were the *children of wrath*; by this Regeneration they are the *children of grace*, being translated out of the Family of Satan into Gods own Family, and in and through Christ they are made the adopted Sons of God. Oh that the Lord would open our eyes to see this priviledge! *Behold*, saith S. John, *what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the Sons of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 1. The Apostle not being able to express the greatness of Gods love to us therein, he breaks forth into an admiration thereof. And truly well might he say, *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us.* For here is not only *love*, but *love to admiration*, that we vile, wretched, sinful Creatures, who were *dead in sins and trespasses*, *Enemies to God by wicked works*, yea, and *children of wrath as well as others*, Eph. 2. 3. that we should be thus advanced in and by Christ, as to be accounted not only *Servants*, which is much; nor only *Friends*, which is more; but also *Sons*, and consequently *Heirs*, and *Co-heirs* with Christ, which is most of all.

IV. *Christian freedom.* As it is the great unhappiness of the *Unregenerate*, that they are in a state of *vassalage*; so it is the greatest happiness of the *Regenerate*, that they are in a state of freedom; being freed,

1. *From Satan.* Though not from the assaults and temptations of Satan, yet from *the power of Satan.* For our Saviour Christ by his death hath destroyed *him that had the power of death*, that is, *the Devil.* He hath now broken the Serpents head; so that though he may

may *hiſs* againſt us, yet he cannot *ſting* us: though he may *aſſault* us, yet he cannot *overcome* us: and though *he goeth about like a roaring Lyon, ſeeking whom he may devour*; yet Chriſt hath him in a Chain, and he cannot go one Link thereof farther than he pleaſeth.

2. *From ſin.* Though the Regenerate are not freed from the *in-being of ſin*, which doth and will live in them, ſo long as they live in this World; yet are they freed both from the *guilt of ſin*, and from the *power and dominion of ſin.*

1. From the *guilt of ſin*; that is, from that wrath and puniſhment which is due to ſin: ſo that none of our ſins ſhall be able to condemn us. For Chriſt, as our Surety, Saviour, and Redeemer, did bear all our ſins in his Body upon the Tree, and there offered up his life as an all-ſufficient Sacrifice, and full ſatisfaction to Gods Juſtice for the ſame. So that God being fully ſatisfied by the death of Chriſt for our ſins, he will not, nay he cannot in Juſtice require ſatisfaction again from us. Well therefore might the Apoſtle make this bold challenge, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect, ſeeing Chriſt hath died*, and by his death fully ſatisfied Gods Juſtice for their ſins? *Rom.* 8. 33, 34.

2. *From the power and dominion of ſin*; which cometh to paſs by the Spirit of Chriſt conveyed to them, whereby their ſins are in ſome meaſure mortified and ſubdued, ſo that they do not rule nor reign in them as formerly. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you*, ſaith the Apoſtle; *and why? becauſe you are not under the Law, but under Grace.* In our unregenerate eſtate, ſin had not only *poſſeſſion of us*, but *dominion over us*; ſo that we did yield a willing ſubjection unto the command of ſin. But ſince we are regenerated by the Spirit of God, we are freed, though not from the *in-being*, yet from the *dominion* of ſin. So that though ſin may *tyrannize* over us, yet ſhall it not *reign* in us. We ſhall not yield a free and willing obedience to the command thereof.

This is the great comfort of Gods Children, that though ſin be not *removed*, yet it is *ſubdued.* Though they oftentimes feel the workings and ſtirrings of corruption

ruption in them, which make them to have many a sad heart, and wet eye, yet are they freed, through Christ, from the *dominion of sin.*

3. *The Regenerate are freed from the Law*, not only from the *Ceremonial*, and *Judicial* Law, which were peculiar to the *Jews*, and died with the decay of their Common-wealth; but likewise from the *Moral Law*, (which concerns all men, at all times, in all places) yet not as it is a Rule of Obedience, and Christian walking, for so it still remains in force, even to the Children of God, even after their Regeneration: But,

1. *As it was a Covenant of Works*, or as the Covenant thereof was Works. We are not absolutely bound to such rigour, and exactness, as that required. Indeed we ought to endeavour after the most perfect obedience, and to be humbled for our defects and failings therein; but not to despair because of them: for all failings not allowed are pardoned: Besides, Christ our Surety hath in all things fulfilled the Law, and performed perfect obedience thereunto. So that the strictness of the Law being fulfilled by our Surety, its not expected that it should be performed by us in our own persons.

2. We are freed from the *curse and condemnation of the Law. Christ*, saith the Apostle, Gal 3. 13. *hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.* So that although we do not perform it in that exact manner and measure which it requireth, yet our transgressions shall not be imputed to us to condemnation. The Law may condemn the *actions*, but not the *persons* of the Regenerate, it hath nothing to do with them; therefore the Apostle saith, *There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 1.

V. *Provision of all needful good things is another priviledge of the Regenerate*, who have a *right* to all good things through Christ, and the *possession* of all things God seeth good for them. It is observeable, that when God was with *Israel* in the Wilderness (where nothing was to be had) *they lacked nothing*, Deut. 2. 7. It is naturally ingrafted into all Parents to provide for their Children; what then can they want who have God for

their

their Father? who as he is all-ſufficient, ſo a moſt loving Father to his Children, whoſe love far ſurpaſſeth the love of Natural Parents to their Children. Art thou a Child of God by Regeneration? then look up to thy Heavenly Father for a ſupply of all good things. *For can they that are evil, know how to give good gifts to their children?* ſaith our Saviour. *And ſhall not your Heavenly Father give to you the things whereof ye have need? He feedeth the Fowls of the Air, and the Beaſts of the Field*; and he that is careful to provide for his Hawks, and his Hounds, will he ſuffer his Children to beg and ſtarve, who muſt one day be his Heirs? Be not then faithleſs, but believe, and ſay not, *What ſhall we eat? or what ſhall we drink? or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed? For your Heavenly Father knoweth whereof ye have need, and will relieve you,* Matth. 6. 31, 32.

VI. *Acceptance of their ſervices, though full of weakneſſes, infirmities, and imperfections.* Natural Parents are not more ready to accept of the weak ſervices performed by their Children, than God is to take in good part the imperfect ſervices of his Children. How maimed and broken are our prayers many times! yet coming from a broken heart they find acceptance with God. Though he regardeth not the glorious works of Hypocrites, yet he graciouſly accepteth of the weak ſervices of his Children done in ſincerity. When we cannot pray with that affection and fervency as we deſire, yet if we ſet upon it with an honeſt and ſincere heart, doing it in obedience to the Command of God, with a deſire to approve our ſelves unto him therein, and grieving for our failings and imperfections, God will overlook our failings, and Crown our weak endeavours with acceptance.

VII. *Protection from things hurtful*, is another priviledge of the Regenerate. They are here ſubject to manifold caſualties, and contingencies, from which the Lord in mercy protects them, keeping Watch and Ward for them: Yea, he is ſaid to be *a wall of fire round about his people*, Zech. 2. 5. A *wall* to defend them, and of *fire* to conſume thoſe that riſe up againſt them: *So that they ſhall not be afraid of evil tydings, for their*

their hearts are fixed, truſting in the Lord. I deny not but the Children of God may be wronged, oppreſſed, ſpoiled of all they have, and unjuſtly ſlain; yet in all theſe ſhall they not be hurt, for *God will turn all to their good.* Note what *David* ſaid of *Shimei*'s curſing him, 2 Sam. 16. 12. *The Lord will look on my affliction, and requite good for his curſing this day.* On this ground the Hebrews *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, Heb.* 10. 34.

VIII. *Support under all afflictions, is another priviledge of the Regenerate.* For God is preſent with them in all their afflictions, ſupporting their weakneſs with his might; and manifeſting his greateſt power in their greateſt impotency: Yea, though ſometimes he ſeems to leave them in their diſtreſs, yet he giveth ſuch ſufficient ſtrength, as they are thereby inabled to bear it, and well to paſs it through. This is evident by the *Apoſtles* holy Triumph in this caſe, 2 Cor. 4. 8, 9. *We are perplexed, but not in deſpair; perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not deſtroyed.* The ground hereof is the aſſiſtance which God affordeth us, and the ſtrength which he communicateth to us.

IX. *All things ſhall work together for the good of the Regenerate.* And *God will do them good by all in the latter end,* Deut. 8. 16. He will turn their loſſes into gain, their croſſes into comforts, their ſorrows into joy, their curſings into bleſſings. Thoſe afflictive Providences which ſeem to be moſt prejudicial unto them, will in the iſſue prove moſt beneficial. As we ſee in *Joſeph, The evil which his Brethren intended againſt him, turned to his good.* Their ſelling him as a Slave to the *Iſhmaelites,* proved the means of his advancement. How did *Manaſſes* impriſonment work for his good? For the Text ſaith, 2 Chron. 33. 11, 12. *When he was in affliction, he beſought the Lord, and humbled himſelf greatly, and the Lord was intreated of him.* To know that nothing ſhall hurt a child of God, is ground of exceeding great comfort and conſolation: But to be aſſured, that *all things, even all croſs Providences ſhall work together for his good,* is enough to fill the heart with joy. Oh then how great is the happineſs of every Regenerate perſon!

perſon! who may be aſſured that whatſoever befalleth him, ſhall be for his good, and doth work together for the beſt. Certainly, he may truly ſay, *Soul, take thy ſpiritual eaſe, for here is much ſpiritual good treaſured up for thee.*

X. *A bleſſed death.* For ſo ſaith the Spirit, *Rev.* 14. 13. *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord*; that is, in the Faith of Chriſt. Who are bleſſed, both becauſe then *they reſt from their labours*, from all their toil and pains, from all their griefs and ſorrows; As alſo becauſe *their works do follow them*, through free-grace in glorious rewards.

The ſouls of the Regenerate, ſo ſoon as they are by death ſeparated from the body, go immediately into Heaven, as is clear from that Speech of our Saviour to the converted Thief on the Croſs, Luk. 23. 43. *This day thou ſhalt be with me in Paradiſe*; which place the Apoſtle expoundeth to be *the third Heaven.* The word in the Original tranſlated, Σήμερον, *this day*, implyes, that immediately after the breathing of his ſoul out of his body, his ſoul ſhould go to Heaven. And thus it is with all the Regenerate, unto whom Death is like the *Red Sea* to the *Iſraelites*, even a paſſage and thorow-fare into the Heavenly *Canaan.*

XI. *An happy Reſurrection.* For at the ſound of the laſt Trumpet all the Regenerate ſhall ariſe out of their graves, like ſo many *Joſephs* out of priſon. Whatſoever imperfections were before in their bodies (as blindneſs, lameneſs, crookedneſs) ſhall then be done away: Though the body was *ſown in corruption*, yet it ſhall be raiſed *in incorruption*, not to be ſubject to any manner of aches, pains, diſeaſes, or imperfections: Though it were *ſown in weakneſs*, it ſhall be raiſed *in power*: And though it was *ſown in diſhonour*, *it ſhall be raiſed in glory*, 1 Cor. 15. 42. Here it is many times deformed, but then all deformities and defects ſhall be removed, and the body made more glorious, through the admirable beauty thereof. Certainly if the Beauty of all the Men and Women in the World were concentred in one, it would be far ſhort of the Beauty of the Saints in Heaven, whoſe Bodies ſhall ſhine more gloriouſly than the Sun in the Firmament.

XII. The

XII. The laſt and higheſt priviledge of the Regenerate is, *that they ſhall have an Heavenly Inheritance*, Fathers on earth uſe to provide Inheritances for their children: And the Apoſtle Peter *bleſſeth God, who hath begotten us to an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven*, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. The Regenerate in this life *poſſeſs* Heaven in Chriſt, but hereafter they ſhall enjoy it in their own perſons. When they come to enjoy this Heavenly Inheritance, they ſhall not only be freed from all evils, both bodily and ſpiritual; but likewiſe repleniſhed with all good; Their *minds* ſhall be inlightned, their *wills* reformed, their *memories* made bleſſed treaſuries, their *conſciences* purged, their *hearts* purified, their *affections* rectified, their *bodies* glorified, and all theſe perfectly. There ſhall be a bleſſed communion of all the Saints together, who ſhall enjoy the Society of Angels, and fellowſhip with Chriſt himſelf, whoſe ſurpaſſing Excellency they ſhall clearly behold, and partake of that glory wherewith he is arrayed. What tongue can expreſs? what heart can conceive the excellency thereof?

If *Peter, James*, and *John*, ſeeing but ſome ſmall glimpſe of Chriſts Glory and Majeſty in his Transfiguration, were ſo raviſhed therewith, that ſetting aſide all worldly deſires, they wiſhed only the continuance thereof: Then how ſhall the Saints in Heaven be raviſhed with joy and comfort, when they ſhall continually behold their Saviour Jeſus Chriſt ſitting at the right hand of his Father like a Triumphant Conquerour, having ſubdued his, and his Churches Enemies.

Thus have I ſhewed you ſome of the glorious priviledges of the Regenerate. Oh happy day may that man or woman ſay, as long as they live, when God by his Spirit Regenerated them, and made them new Creatures! Many keep their *Birth-day*, as a day of rejoycing and feaſting; but they who know the day of their *New-birth*, may well make that a day of rejoycing while they live, in regard of the many glorious Priviledges whereof they are thereby partakers.

CHAP. XII.

An Exhortation to bleſs God for the work of Regeneration; and to walk worthy thereof.

II. A Second Branch of the Uſe of Exhortation unto the Regenerate is, *To be thankful unto God for this great mercy.* Admire the grace of God, and bleſs his Name for ever. Art thou made alive? Is the life of God begotten in thee? And haſt thou evidence of it? O bleſs God whileſt thou haſt any being: Let thine heart, and mouth, and life be filled with his praiſes: Take up the Pſalmiſts words, Pſal. 103. 1, 2. *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and all that is within me, bleſs his holy Name: Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits.* Wilt thou be thankful unto God for thy *Natural Birth?* And wilt not thou be thankful to him for thy *Spiritual Birth?* Wilt thou bleſs him for that he hath made thee a *Reaſonable Creature?* And wilt thou not bleſs him for making thee a *New-creature?* Wilt thou bleſs him that thou art not a Toad? And wilt thou not bleſs him, that thou art not a Devil? Is not Regeneration of all mercies the moſt neceſſary? And wilt not thou be thankful for that which is the *one thing neceſſary?* If the Children of *Iſrael* praiſed God for their deliverance from the *Ægyptian* Bondage; how much more cauſe haſt thou to praiſe and magnifie the Name of God for thy deliverance from a greater than *Ægyptian* Bondage? it being a deliverance from *Satan*, the worſt of all Tyrants; from Hell, of all Priſons the moſt loathſom: yea, from *Sin, Death*, and the *Curſe of the Law.*

The more to ſtir up thy ſelf to this duty of thankſgiving for this mercy;

1. *Conſider the ſpecialty of Gods love and goodneſs unto thee therein, in ſingling thee out from the multitudes that periſh, and ſetting thee apart for life.* Hath he dealt by all as he hath dealt by thee? Oh how many millions of Men

Men and Women hath he ſuffered to live and die in their ſins, when thy ſoul liveth? How many for Birth more Noble, for Policy more Wiſe, for Riches more Wealthy, are let run in their ſins, till they fall into wrath, when thou art eſcaped? when thou conſidereſt that he ſhould paſs by them, and ſet his ſpecial love upon thee, if this do not fill thee with love, and with praiſes, the very ſtones may cry out againſt thee. The *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaketh of it as a great mercy to a godly man, that in a time of Plague and Peſtilence *a thouſand ſhould fall on his right hand, and on his left, and yet it ſhould not come nigh him.* But what is that to this mercy, that many thouſands ſhould fall into Hell on thy right hand, and on thy left, and yet thou preſerved?

2. *Conſider how ſad thy condition was before thy Regeneration,* being a Child of Wrath, a Bondſlave of Satan, and an Heir to Hell; And then compare it with thy preſent ſtate. Behold of a *Child of Wrath*, thou art made a *Son of God*; of a *Slave of Satan*, thou art become *Chriſts Freeman*; of an *Heir of Hell and Damnation*, an *Heir to Heaven and Salvation.* And doth not this call for thankfulneſs?

3. *Conſider that this mercy is unſpeakably greater than all other mercies in the World.* This New-birth makes a man an *Honourable Perſon*, one of the Royal Seed, a King and Prieſt to God: This makes him a *rich man*, the leaſt degree of this Grace is better than all the wealth in the World: This is the true riches, the durable riches, a treaſure that faileth not, nor can it be valued. This makes him a *joyful man*: there's joy in Heaven at thy Converſion, and a Foundation of Everlaſting Joy laid in thine own Soul: Thou mayſt rejoyce, its meet that thou make merry, for this thy ſoul was dead, and is alive; was loſt, and is found. *Theodoſius* gave God greater thanks that he had made him a *Member of the Church*, than *Head of the Empire.* So bleſs God more for this mercy, that he hath made thee a Member of Chriſt, than if he had made thee an Heir of all the Earth.

What though God hath not abounded to thee in outward Honours and Eſtate, yet if he hath abounded to

thee in Grace, this alone will be matter of Eternal Praiſes. *Luther* hath a notable Story which may be uſeful to this purpoſe: In the time of the *Council* of *Conſtance*, he tells us there were two Cardinals riding to the Council; and in their journey they ſaw a Shepherd in the Field weeping: One of them pitying him, could not but ask him, why he wept? At firſt he ſeemed loth to tell him; but being urged, he told him, that upon the beholding that Toad which was before him, he conſidered, that he had never praiſed God, as he ought, for making him ſuch an Excellent Creature as a Man; that he had not made him ſuch a deformed Creature as that Toad. Upon hearing whereof the Cardinal was much affected, conſidering how he had received greater mercies than this poor man, and yet had not returned unto God that praiſe which was due unto him. And will not this poor man riſe up in judgment againſt many of us? yea, have not the beſt of us cauſe to be greatly humbled before the Lord, who do not ſo affectionately remember the grace of God in making us Chriſtians, as that poor Shepherd did, in making him a Man. O Friend, prove thy ſelf to be born again, and then go thy way rejoycing, leaping, and praiſing God.

III. *Hath God by his Spirit Regenerated, and made thee his Child, then walk worthy of this ſpecial mercy and dignity.* This *worthy walking* is much preſſed in Scripture; as Col. 1. 10. *Walk worthy of the Lord.* And *Eph.* 4. 1. *Walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called.* In theſe, and other like places, the word *Worthy* importeth no matter of *merit* or *condignity*, but only a *meer meetneſs*, and *congruity*, or *anſwerableneſs.* The Greek word Ἄξιος, tranſlated *worthy*, is in other places turned *meet*, or *as becometh*; as Rom. 16. 2. Phil. 1. 27. And where *John Baptiſt* ſaith, *Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, our new Tranſlations turn it, *meet for repentance.* So that the meaning of the foreſaid duty is, *that ye carry your ſelves in ſome meaſure ſuitable and anſwerable to your new birth, and high dignity.* To which agreeth that of the Apoſtle *Peter*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *Ye are a choſen Generation, a peculiar People, that ye ſhould ſhew forth the praiſes of him, who hath called you out of darkneſs*

neſs into his marvellous light. As the Regenerate are more excellent in their ſtate and relation than the carnal and unregenerate; ſo ought they to be ſingular and exemplary in their lives and converſations.

This Chriſt requireth of every true Chriſtian: For, ſaith he, ſpeaking to his *Diſciples*, Mat. 5. 47. *What do ye more than others?* As if he had ſaid, you who will approve your ſelves to be ſincere Chriſtians, and the true Diſciples of Jeſus Chriſt, muſt be of a more holy and heavenly frame, of an higher ſtrain than the reſt of men: you muſt be ſingular, and *ſhine as lights in the midſt of a ſinful and crooked generation,* by living exemplary, and convincing lives; that it may be ſaid of you, what God ſaid of Job, *There was none like him in all the earth*; as for Wealth, ſo for Piety, he being by many degrees the higheſt for grace in his Age.

Hath God ſhined upon your ſouls by his grace, *let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven,* Mat. 5. 16.

The more to quicken you up to a ſingular and exemplary life, to a life above the rate of carnal and unregenerate men:

I. *Conſider thy high birth, and noble Parentage.* For being born of the Spirit, thou art thereby made partaker of the *Divine Nature*, and art become a *Child of God*, a *Member of Chriſt*, and haſt *Blood-Royal* running in thy Veins. Thy life ought to be ſuitable to thy birth and breeding, aſpiring after higher things than worldly men do, or can do; and avoiding thoſe baſe and filthy actions wherein carnal men take their chief delight: For know that thy ſins go nearer the Heart of God, and provoke him more, than the ſins of other men. Καὶ σὺ τεκνὸν, &c. *And thou my Son* Brutus, *art thou one of them?* ſaid *Julius Cæſar* to his Son, when he ſaw him to be amongſt them that murthered him: that went deeper to his heart, than the Swords of all his Enemies did, or could. In like manner, the ſins of Gods Children are greater in his ſight, and do more grieve him, than the ſins of other men.

II. *Conſider thine high and holy calling.* Thou art call-

ed out of darkneſs into light; out of the Kingdom of Satan, into the Kingdom of the Lord Jeſus. Shall there be no difference betwixt the Children of the Kingdom, and the Children of the Wicked One? betwixt Gods Servants, and the Devils Slaves? Art thou one of the called of God? oh how doth it concern thee to follow the connſel of the Apoſtle to the *Epheſians*; namely, *to walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith thou art called*; that is, ſuitable to the dignity and purity of it.

1. *Thy calling is an high calling*, Phil. 3. 14. And therefore as men called to high Places, carry themſelves anſwerably thereunto. In like manner, thou being called to be a Chriſtian, it is thy duty (that thou mayſt not diſgrace thy holy Profeſſion, and that worthy Name by which thou art called) to carry thy ſelf becomingly, and ſuitably to it, by hating every ſin, labouring daily in the mortifying every luſt and corruption, keeping thy ſelf unſpotted of the world.

2. *Thy calling is an holy calling*, 2 Tim. 1. 9. the end thereof is holineſs: *For God hath not called us unto uncleanneſs, but unto holineſs*, 1 Theſ. 4. 7. Now an *holy calling* ought to be accompanied with an *holy life* and converſation; being called from darkneſs to light, from ſinfulneſs to holineſs, from the Fleſh to the Spirit, from Satan to God; is it not moſt meet thou ſhouldſt caſt off the unfruitful works of darkneſs, and walk as a Child of Light? That thou ſhouldſt no more *give thy members as ſervants unto ſin, but as ſervants unto righteouſneſs? That thou ſhouldſt no more fulfil the luſts of the fleſh, but walk in the ſpirit, after the motions thereof?* This is to walk worthy of the Vocation whereunto *thou art called.*

III. *Conſider the many great and ſingular Priviledges God hath vouchſafed unto you.* Being raiſed above the condition of other men, it beſeemeth not you to act as the men of the World, but to live above their rate, to be more holy and heavenly in your converſation, more zealous for God, more fervent in the performance of holy and Religious duties. The Lord expects greater matters, and other manner of ſervice from you, than from other men; for he hath done more for you, and beſtowed more on you, than upon all the World beſides.

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When you call to mind your Priviledges, reaſon thus with your ſelves; Hath God made us partakers of ſuch and ſuch ſpecial mercies, and ſingular priviledges, *Oh then what manner of perſons ought we to be in all holy converſation and godlineſs!* How ought we to walk worthy ſuch ſingular priviledges, by ſingularity of actions! doing ſome ſingular things for God who hath dealt ſo ſingularly well for us. As God hath abounded to us in his choiceſt mercies, ſo he expects we ſhould be abundant in *ſingular duties.*

CHAP. XIII.

Sheweth the ſingular good things which the Regenerate ought to do above others.

I. TO *make Conſcience of their precious time, and to improve it to the beſt advantage.* Carnal men make little or no conſcience of ſpending their time to any good advantage. Oh the many golden hours, and days, and weeks, and years, that thouſands of them ſpend, who yet cannot give the leaſt account wherein they have done any thing which tends to the glory of God, the good of others, or the furthering their own Salvation! Their minds are ſo much ſet upon their carnal luſts and pleaſures, that their chief care is, not ſo much how to improve their time, as how they may paſs it away in mirth and jollity: That which when it is once gone, all the World will not buy it back, what a cheap thing is it accounted? But oh how doth it concern ſuch, whom God hath called, to prize the time which he is pleaſed to afford unto them; and to be careful in improving the ſame to ſome good advantage! yea, to gather up the fragments of time, every inch of it, that nothing may be loſt: We cannot well ſpare one ſpare hour. O make the beſt of thy day. To this end,

1. *Conſider that thine everlaſting ſtate depends upon thy well or ill ſpending of thy time.* Many make light of their time, and thereupon play and ſport it away: Yet there

is no moment which thou doſt miſpend, but for ought thou knoweſt it may be the very time upon which thine Eternal State doth depend. Oh what a madneſs muſt it needs be, for an hours or days pleaſure, to hazard the loſs of Everlaſting Happineſs, and to incur the danger of Eternal Miſery! And yet how few think of the paſſing away their time, or that any great matter depends thereupon!

2. *Conſider the preciouſneſs of time, which is of more worth than all the riches and treaſures in the world:* for they cannot purchaſe one minute of time. Should the Lord be pleaſed to vouchſafe unto a damned ſoul in hell, but one weeks time to live again upon the earth, for tryal how he would improve the ſame to his ſouls advantage, oh how highly would he prize it! how carefully would he improve every moment thereof! how ſerious would he be in every holy duty, and in all the concernments of his ſoul! how conſcionable in ſpending of the Sabbath! how watchful would he be on that day over his thoughts, words, and actions! Should he hear Chriſt tendred in the Miniſtry of the Goſpel as a *Saviour* to poor ſinners, oh how readily would he cloſe with the offer of Jeſus Chriſt! how heartily would he imbrace him! Should he be tempted by ſome carnal friends to ſpend one day with them in mirth and jollity, how would he anſwer them! *Alas, the time on which my everlaſting condition doth depend is very ſhort; and muſt it not be egregious folly in me to trifle away part thereof? Shall I implunge my ſoul into eternal flames for a little pleaſure, and ſhort delight? Oh, God forbid.* And hereby may you ſee how precious time is. Surely little reaſon have any to be ſparing of their wealth, and ſo prodigal of their time; when as all the wealth in the World (as before is ſaid) cannot purchaſe one hours time.

3. *Conſider how much precious time you have already loſt*; how many hours, and days, and weeks, and years you have trifled away in vanity and pleaſure, yea in ſin and wickedneſs. Though in likelihood the greateſt part of your time is paſt and gone, yet it is to be feared that little of your work is done: Is it not meet then, now to begin to make Conſcience of your precious time, and

to

to improve it better? The time which you have already loſt can never be recalled. O let no more of it run out in vain. Oh think it too much, that you have ſpent ſo much of it already to ſo little, or ſuch evil purpoſe: And now at length reſolve to be thrifty, to be more watchful over your ſelves, and more provident for hereafter. You have but a little time to live, yet much may be done in that little. Throw not away that inch which remains after the many years that are gone, and can no more be recalled.

4. *Conſider the ſhortneſs of thy life*; it is but a moment to Eternity: And is it not pity to loſe any thing of that which is precious and ſhort?

5. *Conſider as the ſhortneſs, ſo the uncertainty of thy life.* You know what was ſaid to him who promiſed life to himſelf for many years, *Thou fool, this night thy ſoul ſhall be taken from thee.* And it may be thou mayſt this next night receive the like doom. And if thy time be ended, and thy work to be begun, oh how ſad is thy caſe like to be!

6. *Conſider, as the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of thy time, ſo the greatneſs of the work to be performed therein:* thy Luſts muſt be mortified, thy Graces ſtrengthned, thine Evidences for Heaven cleared up, *&c.* Here is a great deal of work to be done in a little time. Doth it not then concern thee ſpeedily to beſtir thy ſelf, and not to loſe a minute?

7. *Conſider the preſent time is only thine to improve: Behold now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation*, 1 Cor. 6. 2. Oh then, why wilt thou trifle away the time which is properly thine, and promiſe to thy ſelf great things in a time which is none of thine? For even the next hour, yea the next minute thou mayſt be cut off by the ſtroak of death; and then all opportunities of doing and receiving good are taken away.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of imbracing every opportunity of doing and receiving good.

II. ANother *ſingular thing* which the Regenerate ought to do above others is, *To imbrace every opportunity of doing and receiving good.* By *doing good*, I mean not only *beneficence to the poor*, but alſo *a conſcionable performance of all Chriſtian Duties*; whether they concern the glory of God, the edification of our Brethren, or the ſalvation of our own Souls. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*, ſaith the *Wiſe Man*, Eccl. 9. 10. that is, whatſoever opportunity of doing good is afforded unto thee, do it vigorouſly and ſpeedily, not deferring it till it be too late. Mark his reaſon in the next words; *For there is no work in the grave, whither thou art going.* As if he had ſaid, In this life thou haſt many opportunities of doing good, but in the grave thou ſhalt have neither power, nor opportunities: When thy night cometh there is an end of working; therefore while it is day, and while thou haſt an opportunity, up and be doing.

Doth the Lord afford unto thee any opportunity either of *laying up for thine own ſoul*, or of *laying out for the good of thy Brothers ſoul*; be careful to imbrace the ſame, yea and to improve it to the beſt advantage. Having a price put into thy hands, oh let it not carelefly ſlip away, leſt thou full dearly repent thereof; ſaying, *Oh what an opportunity have I loſt of benefiting both my ſelf and others! how might I have furthered both mine own, and others Salvation, by building up one another in the moſt Holy Faith! But fool that I was, I have carelefly neglected theſe precious opportunities, which will never be regained.* Oh how will the thought thereof one day or other gall thy Conſcience!

That thou mayſt be the more ſtirred up to imbrace and improve every opportunity God by his Providence affordeth unto thee, 1. *Con-*

1. *Conſider how worldly men hug their opportunities for the World*; and wilt not thou imbrace thy opportunities for Heaven? The *Tradeſman* neglects not his opportunity of buying and ſelling, but carefully attends the ſame: The *Merchant* will not loſe his *Exchange-time*, nor the *Marriner* his *Wind* and *Tyde*; the *Lawyer* will not loſe his *Terms*, nor the *Husbandman* his *Seed-time*, or *Harveſt*. If thou loſe thy Seed-time of grace, thou thereby loſeſt the Harveſt of glory.

2. *Conſider how few thy remaining opportunities may be.* For ought thou knoweſt, the time is near at hand, when thy praying opportunities, and hearing opportunities, and receiving opportunities, and relieving opportunities, with the like, will be paſt and gone. How then doth it concern thee to improve them whileſt thou haſt them, and to uſe thy preſent, as if it were the laſt ſeaſon, and opportunity would be afforded unto thee?

If thou art in the company of a godly experienced Chriſtian, thou haſt then an opportunity of gaining much ſpiritual good and advantage to thine own ſoul; as by obſerving his graces, ſo by propounding thy doubts and ſcruples unto him. Oh let not ſuch an opportunity paſs away without ſome ſpiritual improvement.

If thou art called to viſit a dying Friend, or Neighbour, oh what an opportunity haſt thou put into thy hand to do his ſoul good! by adviſing him to think of death, and to prepare for it, to make his peace with God, to caſt himſelf and the burthen of his ſins upon Chriſt, to build the hope of his Salvation only upon that Rock the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

If in walking abroad, or travelling on the Road, thou fall into company, what good mayſt thou do by ſome ſavoury and ſpiritual diſcourſe of God, or of mans miſerable condition by Nature, or of the ſtate of Redemption by Jeſus Chriſt, or the like? oh how much might thy care this way abound to thy account? Remember the words of the Apoſtle, *Exhort one another daily, while it is called to day.*

If the Lord hath given thee a Family, and furniſhed thee with abilities for their inſtruction and edification, let not the ſouls that are with thee be loſt through thy neglect.

neglect. Thou haſt daily opportunities to be ſowing thy ſeed in their ſouls, which may ſpring up to their Eternal Life. And for thy Neighbours that live about thee, let them find thee a *good Neighbour* to them; and that they will beſt do, if thou endeavour to help them to be *good Chriſtians.*

CHAP. XV.

Of performing good Duties after a right manner.

III. ANother ſingular duty incumbent upon the Regenerate is, *To be careful of the manner of performing good Duties:* Not only to be conſcionable in the uſe of Ordinances, but likewiſe to work up their hearts to a conſcionableneſs in the manner of doing them.

1. *For therein eſpecially is our reſpect to God manifeſted.* As for the duties themſelves, many reſpects may induce us to the outward performance of them; as Obedience to Authority, deſire of a good Name, hope of meriting thereby, or the like. But it is reſpect to God (who ſearcheth the heart) that moveth men to do the good duties they take in hand, *after a right manner*, ſo as they may be pleaſing and acceptable unto him.

2. *The moſt holy Duties we take in hand, are clean perverted and depraved through our failing in the manner of performing them.* Yea, holy duties are thereby turned into ſin, as the Prophet *Iſay* implieth, Iſa. 66. 3. *He that killeth an Oxe*, for Sacrifice, *is as if he ſlew a man: He that Sacrificeth a Lamb, as if he cut off a Dogs Neck.* Though the Sacrificing of Oxen and Lambs were good, and commanded by God himſelf; yet becauſe they failed in the manner of performing them, they were no more acceptable to God, than the killing of men, or cutting off a Dogs neck; which things were forbidden by the Law, and an abomination to the Lord.

3. *Failing in the manner of performance, makes God not only to reject our duties, but to pronounce a woe and a curſe againſt the performers of them. Curſed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently*, Jer. 48. 10. Though it be

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the *work of the Lord*, that work which the Lord appointeth to be done, yet notwithſtanding if it be done *negligently*, not after a right manner, *curſed is he that doth it.*

4. *It is the right manner of performing Duties, that obtaineth a bleſſing from God.* It may be thou haſt heard much, and prayed much, and faſted much, and yet haſt found little good, or benefit thereby. Examine whether thou haſt not been dead and dull, formal and perfunctory in them, doing them as if thou didſt them not. If ſo, no marvel thou haſt received ſo little good by them. As therefore thou wouldſt be loth to pray in vain, or hear in vain, or faſt in vain; as thou wouldſt be loth to loſe the things which thou haſt wrought, ſee to it that thou be as careful of the *manner*, as of the *matter* of them; how thou doſt them, as that thou doſt them. Do what thou doſt with *all thy ſoul*, yea, and with *all thy might*, and then thou mayſt expect a plentiful and gracious return.

For the right manner of performing good Duties, take theſe few directions.

I. Be ſure you take Chriſt with you, both for *aſſiſtance* and *acceptance*.

1. *For aſſiſtance. For without me*, ſaith Chriſt, *you can do nothing*: That is, without *Union* with Chriſt, and *Communion* with him, you cannot perform any acceptable ſervice unto God. You may fall upon the duty of Prayer, and attend upon the Miniſtry of the Word; but without aſſiſtance from Chriſt, you can neither do the one, nor the other, as you ſhould. Whenſoever therefore you ſet upon any good duty, in the firſt place beg ſtrength and aſſiſtance from Chriſt, and reſt and lean upon him for his help; go not to pray, or hear, but in the ſtrength of the Lord.

2. *Take Chriſt with you for acceptance, both of your perſons and ſervices.* Chriſt is the *beloved Son of God*, with whom he is ſo well pleaſed, that likewiſe in him he is well pleaſed with all thoſe that come to God by him, and look for neither Audience nor acceptance, but upon his account alone. The truth is, as our perſons are vile and wretched, and all as an unclean thing; ſo our ſervices,

vices, even our moſt holy ſervices, are all polluted and tainted with the corruption of our Natures: and therefore they are odious and abominable in the ſight of God, who may juſtly reject both us and them; and will do it, unleſs covered with the worthineſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but in him we ſhall not fail to obtain gracious acceptance.

Whenſoever therefore we go unto God in prayer, or in any other Ordinance, let us carry Chriſt with us in the Arms of our Faith. *Plutarch* in the Life of *Themiſtocles* reports, that it was the uſual cuſtom of ſome of the Heathens, namely, the *Moloſſians*, that when they would ſeek the favour of their King, they took *his Son* in their arms, and ſo went unto him. And queſtionleſs it would be the wiſdom of Chriſtians, in ſeeking the face and favour of God, who is the King of Heaven and Earth, to take the holy Child Jeſus with them, without whom they may not ſee his face.

II. *Stir up thy ſelf, and all thy ſtrength*; put forth thy ſelf to the uttermoſt, ſtrive to be lively, active, and ſtirring in Spirit. Get the Spirit of Faith, and of Power, this will be Oyl to the Wheels, and Wind to the Sails, which ſet all a going: let this be wanting, and thy beſt ſervices will be lifeleſs and dead ſervices, in which the Lord takes no delight.

There is a threefold ſtrength we ſhould labour to put forth in all our holy duties.

1. Strength of Intention. 2. Strength of Affections. 3. Strength of Body.

1. We muſt *intend* our work, as if it were for our lives; for ſo it is, whether it be the work of *Praying*, *Hearing*, *Meditating*, or the like. We muſt put forth the ſtrength of our *intention*, as well as of our *attention*, not giving way either to drowſineſs of body, or diſtractions of mind. But oh what light matters are apt to ſteal away our minds and thoughts in the performance of holy duties? If one of our Superiours were talking with us, he would expect that we ſhould mind what he ſaith, and not turn aſide to talk with every one that paſſeth by us. But when God is ſpeaking to us in the Miniſtry of his Word, or we are ſpeaking unto him by

by Prayer, how ordinarily do we turn aside to every vain thought, and trifling business, which offereth it self to us! Intend God more earnestly, and this will fire your thoughts.

2. *Strength of affections* is required in every good duty. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*, saith the Wise Man, *Eccl.* 9. 10. This may especially be applied to the duties of Gods worship and service, that we do them vigorously, with all the strength of our affections: Which the Apostle requireth, where he bids us, *Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*, Rom. 12. 11. The word in the Greek, Τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες, notes an *ebullition, or boiling up of our spirits to the height*. There is nothing in the World more unbecoming the Worship of God than flatness of spirit, and coldness of affection, when a man serves God as if he served him not. It was *Davids* commendation, that *the zeal of Gods house did eat him up*, Psal. 69. 9. Which expression sheweth the vehemency of his zeal, and strength of his affections, as in reforming Gods house, so in performing the duties of his worship and service. For this was *Jacob* honoured, and called *Israel*, because he prayed with the *strength of his affections*, and is therefore said to *wrestle with God in prayer*, whereby he *prevailed*, *Hos.* 12. 3, 4. As thou desirest to prevail with God in prayer, thou must with *Jacob*, *wrestle with him*, putting forth the strength of thine affections, which will be a special means to keep away vain wandring thoughts. So long as Honey is boiling hot, Flies will not venture on it: So if the heart and affections be boiling hot in prayer, vain thoughts are not apt to enter in.

3. *Strength of body* must likewise be put forth in every good duty: For God must be worshipped, as with *our spirits*, so with *our bodies*. And blessed is the strength which is put forth in the service of God. Carnal men are apt to lay out the strength of their bodies upon their lusts: Why then should not we be as ready to lay out the strength of our bodies in the service of God? Then may we have occasion to bless God, and say, *Lord, thou mightest have left me to have spent my strength in sin, in the gratifying my carnal lusts; but blessed be thy Name,*

Name, who haſt made me willing to ſpend, and be ſpent in the ſervice of my God.

III. *Labour to keep cloſe to God in holy duties.* It were well, if in the performance of holy duties, we did keep cloſe to the duties themſelves; few go ſo far. But it muſt be our care not only to keep cloſe to the duties, but likewiſe to keep cloſe to God in the duties. We muſt labour, not only to mind what we are about, but likewiſe have an eye upon God, and to hold communion with him therein. In the uſe of every Ordinance, let our main deſire, care and endeavour be, to find God therein; and not to reſt ſatisfied without meeting him, and converſing with him. Let us never go from God without God: never go from the Ordinance of God, without ſome ſpecial communion with God therein, without finding our hearts raiſed and affected in the duty, and revived and refreſhed in his preſence.

IV. In regard of our great inability, and inſufficiency for the performance of any ſpiritual duty after a right manner. In the firſt place, let us beg of God, that by his Spirit he would inable us thereunto: For it is the Spirit of God only that can help our infirmities; he can ſofren our hearts, quicken our dead hearts, inlarge our ſtraightned hearts, &c. And in praying for the aſſiſtance of the Spirit, let us plead the promiſe of God, ſaying, *Lord, thou haſt promiſed in thy Word, that thy Spirit ſhall help the infirmities of thy ſervants; Oh make good that promiſe unto me; let me feel and find the ſweet breathings and actings, the lively quicknings and inlargements of thy Spirit upon my heart, carrying me forth with much life and vigour in the duty I am now going about.* This pleading the Promiſe of God, puts a ſtrong ingagement upon him to perform what he hath ſaid.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Of walking Circumspectly and Exactly.

IV. ANother singular duty incumbent upon the Regenerate is, *To walk circumspectly and exactly*, according to that of the Apostle, *See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.* The word in the Original translated *circumspectly*, cometh of two words, which signifie to *go to the extremity of a thing.* We must be willing to go to the utmost of every command. The same word is used by the Evangelist St. *Matthew*, when *Herod* charged the Wise men to search *most diligently* and *narrowly, to make a close and a thorow search* for the young Child Jesus. So that by this Phrase is intended great *accurateness* and *exactness* in our Christian conversation, which the Spirit of God accounteth the greatest point of wisdom, as appeareth from the following words, *not as fools, but as wise men.* It is no part of folly, but a great point of wisdom to be circumspect in the whole course of our lives. I know the men of the World count preciseness of life the greatest folly that may be: and therefore often call those *precise fools*, who endeavour to live soberly, righteously and Godly in this present World. But at last it will appear the greatest point of Wisdom.

For the better clearing and pressing this duty, I shall shew you, wherein this *exact walking* doth consist;

1. *In walking by rule.* As the Carpenter when he would do his work *exactly*, doth all by rule. So must the Christian that would walk accurately, he must walk by the Word of God, which is the only adequate rule of holiness: He must eat and drink, and buy and sell, and work and rest, and all by this rule. Therefore saith the Apostle, Gal. 6. 16. *As many as walk by this rule, peace be on them, and on the Israel of God.* Let our walking be never so specious and glorious, yet if it be not strait and *accord-*

ing to the rule of Scripture, as it will afford no true ſolid comfort at the laſt, ſo neither will it find acceptance with God. For as nothing is a ſin (how great a ſhew of evil ſoever it beareth) but that which ſwerveth from the direction of Gods Word. So nothing is a good work, (how great a ſhew of goodneſs ſoever it beareth) but only that which is according to the direction of his Word. Therefore *Moſes* giveth this in expreſs charge to the Iſraelites, Deut. 5. 32. *Ye ſhall obſerve to do, as the Lord your God hath commanded you: ye ſhall not turn aſide to the right hand, nor to the left.*

2. Our exact walking conſiſteth in having reſpect to the *inward and ſpiritual part of the Law*; as well as to the *outward* and *external*. In every command of God there is both an *outward and external part*, and alſo *an inward and ſpiritual part*. The former I may call *the letter of the Law*: the latter *the Spirit of the Law*. This our Saviour excellently clears in his Sermon on the Mount, where reciting the ſixth Commandment, he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt do no Murther*, there is the letter of the Law, And then adds by way of Explanation, Mat. 5. 21, 22. *But I ſay unto you, whoſoever is angry with his Brother without a cauſe, ſhall be in danger of Judgement*; there is the Spirit of the Law. So afterwards reciting the ſeventh commandment ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery*, there is the letter of the Law, And then adds, *But I ſay unto you, that whoſoever looks on a Woman to Luſt after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart*, Mat. 5. 28. There is the Spirit of the Law, or the Spiritual part thereof. The moſt diligent obſervation of the letter or external part of the Law without a care of the inward and ſpiritual part, is as a body without a ſoul, a dead thing, which is no way acceptable unto the living God. Hence our Saviour ſpent ſo many words to convince the *Phariſees*, who were many of them punctual in their outward obſervations, that they were yet horrible Hypocrites, violating that Law in their hearts, which they ſo boaſted of, and pleaded for with their mouths, being *Murtherers in heart, Adulterers in heart*, though they committed no ſuch wickedneſs in the outward man.

And hereby is the hypocriſie of many profeſſors of Chriſtianity

Christianity discovered, who reach no farther than the outside of Religion; whose Godliness is nothing but carnal service, and bodily exercise. Whereas the Law is *spiritual*, as the Apostle speaketh, *reaching to the very inwards of the Soul*, Rom. 7. 14. And saith our Saviour, Joh. 4. 24. *God is a Spirit, and will be worshipped inwardly with the spirit, as well as outwardly with the body.* Whosoever therefore walks exactly, contents not himself with the externals of Christianity, but labours to bring up his heart to the inwards thereof; striving to suppress evil thoughts, to mortifie unclean lusts, and all inordinate affections; to abhor and watch against secret impurities, as well as open impieties. This is to walk exactly and accurately indeed: for so the world in the Greek Ἀκριβῶς seemeth to import in its proper notion, *viz. A going from the bottom to the top of the rule.*

3. Our exact walking consisteth in *a careful avoiding all occasions of evil, and temptations thereunto.* Having by sad experience found such and such things to have been snares, and occasions of sin unto us, it is our duty, and will be our wisdom, carefully to shun and eschew the same. Especially considering that by running into temptations, we tempt the Lord, and provoke him to give us over to our weakness, and to the power of our corruptions; that so by our falls we may for the time to come be more wise and wary,

Every man by nature is like dry wood, which is apt to kindle so soon as fire is put to it. There needs not any Devils to tempt us. Dry stubble will take fire without any bellows to blow it. Let the least occasion that is be offered unto us, how easily doth it take? every spark will catch upon our tinder hearts. The first sin that proved so fatal to Man-kind came by temptation. The Devil prevailed with *Eve* to go and see the forbidden fruit, telling her, that though she might not eat it, yet she might lawfully look on it, and that became the occasion of her fall. For from sight and view she proceeded to touch and taste, to the taking in of that which proved the bane both of her and hers.

By the like means how sadly doth the Devil prevail upon souls daily? what windows doth he make our eys and ears

to let in temptation first, and then iniquity? what snares doth he make of our voluptuous tables? our vain and loose companions? our gorgious apparel? our vain and wanton fashions? even forming our hearts into the image of those vanities, and leading us out to all iniquity. As our Saviour therefore taught us to pray, *that we enter not into temptation.* So it will be our wisdom to see to it, that our practice be according to our prayers. What a mockery is it, this hour to pray against temptations, and the next hour to be running into them? Pray against temptations, and watch against them. Watch against all temptations, but especially such as are most taking with thee: and such as have a tendency to thy bosom and best beloved sins. For from them is most danger to be feared, they having most strength from our natures. The Devil knowing full well, which are our bosom and beloved sins, and most predominant lusts, unto them especially, and with greatest success doth he apply his temptations.

4. Our exact walking consisteth *in abstaining from appearances of evil, as well as from apparent and direct evills.* 1 Thes. 5.22. As there are some things apparently evil, so there are other things in shew and appearance only evil. He who walks circumspectly and exactly will as carefully shun the one as the other. He will not adventure upon any thing that looks like sin, or that hath the least affinity with it. If the thing be doubtful whether it may, or may not be done, he will do that which is most safe, and leave the other undone. Yea though he know a thing to be lawful in it self, yet if it may prove a stumbling block in the way of another, and so be an occasion of sin unto him, he will carefully avoid the same.

Upon this account St. *Paul resolved to avoid the eating of flesh,* though he might lawfully do it: yet when it was like to be a stumbling-block to his weak Brother, in regard it had an appearance of evil in it, he said, *If meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the World standeth,* 1 Cor. 8. 13. Upon this ground likewise the *Apostles* and *Elders* in the first general Council at *Jerusalem* imposed upon the *Gentiles abstinence from meat offered to Idols, from things strangled, and from blood,* Act. 15.29.

Nor

Not for that these meats were in themselves unclean and unlawful; but because they were apprehended to be so unto many of the *Jews*, who were kept off from Christ, because those meats, in which they supposed to be such uncleanness, were ordinarily eaten by the *Christans*. Hereupon it concerns us in all our actions to be satisfied, not only of the lawfulness but likewise of the expediency of them. For many things in themselves may be lawful, which yet in some respect may not be expedient, because they have some shew of evil in them, or are lyable to some mis-construction, or may be occasions of sin unto our selves, or of scandal and offence unto our weak Brother, or may strengthen and confirm wicked men in their ungodly courses, and the like.

But herein this caution is to be observed, that all necessary duties commanded by God, ought to be performed by us, though our Brother be offended at them, and though to the World they have some appearance of evil. Christs Doctrines, Works and Conversations were an offence to many in his dayes, yet he went on therein, and pronounced them *blessed who were not offended in him*. We may not therefore shun profession of holiness, and the practice of Godliness, because unto Worldly men it appeareth but *brain-sick peevishness*, and an *irrational preciseness*. But being commanded by God in his Word, ought to be endeavoured after. I may not wound mine own Conscience to secure my Brothers.

5. Our exact walking consisteth *in a moderate use of lawfull things*. That overmuch liberty which some men have given to themselves in such things as are in their own nature lawful, hath proved great occasion of sin unto them. Our Saviour seemeth to blame the men of the old World, that when the Flood came upon them, *they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building*, Luke 17, 27, 28. Things no doubt in themselves lawful to be done: but by over using those lawful things, and setting their hearts upon them, they laid aside all care of Heavenly things; and increased their pride and covetousness, neglecting the threatning of a Flood, and so drowned themselves in perdition.

The Apostle therefore tells us, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31.

that they who marry, muſt be as if they married not; and they who buy, as if they bought not; and they who uſe this world, as not abuſing it. There is a lawful uſing the comforts of this life, and an unlawful, an abuſing of them. We lawfully uſe them, when we enjoy them with moderation, and with ſubordination to Spiritual Grace, and Heavenly Glory, when we uſe all we have for God: We abuſe the comforts of this life, when we uſe them too much, even *exceſſively*, in reſpect of the meaſure, and *inordinately*, in reſpect of the manner; when letting out our hearts too much upon them, the things which ſhould lead us to God, withdraw us from him.

To ſpend ſome time in *honeſt recreations*, for the refreſhing of our minds, and ſtrengthening our bodies, is lawful: But to waſte too much of our precious time in ſports and paſtimes, making a *Vocation* of our *Recreations*; or to give up our hearts unto our pleaſure, to uſe thoſe delights for themſelves, and not for God; or to uſe them more for gain, than for refreſhment, they are thereby turned unto ſin.

In like manner, ſometimes to *feaſt* with our Friends and Neighbours is lawful; but to be too frequent therein, or *intemperate*, *feeding without fear*, as the Apoſtle *Jude* hath it, *Jude v.* 12. never taſting the ſweetneſs of God in the Creature, nor having reſpect to that Communion which ſhould be amongſt Saints, is to abuſe Gods good Creatures.

So to be diligent in the works of our Calling, is in it ſelf both lawful and commendable: But when we ſhall be ſo diligent in our particular Calling, that we neglect the duties of our general Calling, as Chriſtians: I mean, when we are ſo taken up with our worldly buſineſſes and imployments, that we can find no time for ſerving God, either *ſecretly* in our Chambers or *privately* with our Families, is to make our lawful Calling ſinful unto us: Much more when we mingle fraud and deceit with our dealings, and cannot be content with that gain that comes in by Righteouſneſs, and honeſty in all our ways; this is to turn our *lawful Calling* into a *Myſtery of Iniquity.*

The beſt of Gods Children are apt to uſe the lawful things

things of this World unlawfully, and to abuſe them by their exceſs therein. Did not our *Saviour* warn his *Diſciples* that they ſhould take heed of abuſing, as their meat and drink, unto ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, ſo their Callings to worldlineſs and coveteouſneſs? *Take heed to your ſelves, leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, and cares of this life*, Luk. 21. 34. Who would not have thought the Diſciples of Chriſt far enough from theſe ſins? yet they muſt *take heed to themſelves therein.* If the green Tree may ſo eaſily take fire, what will not the dry do?

Oh then how doth it concern us to ſet bounds to our ſelves in all lawful things! not to exceed either in our Recreations, or in our Vocations, or in our Eating, Drinking, and the like: but to obſerve the golden mean, the rather, becauſe the Devil in nothing more prevaileth with Gods people, than in their immoderate and inordinate uſage of things lawful; knowing full well, that the godly will not eaſily be drawn to the committing of ſuch things as carry wickedneſs in their foreheads, he therefore layeth his ſnares for them in the uſe of things lawful; as their meat and drink, their apparel and recreation, their trading and traffick, with the like: wherein his ſnares being not ſo viſible, he oftentimes prevaileth with them. The Apoſtle declaring what a cruel, crafty, and malicious Adverſary the Devil is, whom he ſetteth forth to be *a roaring Lyon, that walketh about, ſeeking to devour*, 1 Pet. 5. 9. He thereupon adviſeth us to be as *ſober in the uſe of things lawful and indifferent*, ſo *watchful over our ſelves*, leſt we be foiled therein.

For your better help herein, take theſe few Directions:

1. *In the free uſe of lawful things, be ever jealous of your ſelves, leſt you abuſe them to intemperancy, and exceſs.* This hath been the folly of many, that preſuming too much, as on their Chriſtian liberty, ſo upon their own ſtrength, have adventured upon ſuch temptations, as have occaſioned their fearful falls.

2. *Labour to make a ſpiritual improvement of all thoſe lawful comforts which God hath afforded to you for your*

delight. And ſo whileſt you refreſh your bodies, you will cheriſh your ſouls. Thus in your eating and drinking, often meditate of Gods bounty in providing ſo plentifully for you; and not only take in meats, but likewiſe give out gracious diſcourſes and inſtructions. For what can it be but egregious folly, when you are feeding your bodies, to neglect your ſouls? In putting on your Cloaths, meditate on the Robe of Chriſts Righteouſneſs, which alone can make you amiable in the ſight of God; deſiring with the Apoſtle, *to be found cloathed therewith at the great day.*

3. *Conſider, that to uſe your lawful comforts to the utmoſt extent, is the next door to ſin.* He who will go to the utmoſt extent of what he may lawfully do, is in danger to go beyond it, and to do alſo that which is unlawful. He who will walk upon the brink of a River, may fall into the Water: And he who will take the utmoſt liberty he may, is very near falling into ſin.

CHAP. XVII.

Of the danger of Covetouſneſs, as being the Root of all Evil.

V. ANother ſingular Duty incumbent upon the Regenerate is, *To beware of Covetouſneſs, and over-loving the World, as being the Root of all Evil.* I do not ſay, that our hearts being changed and renewed, we ought thereupon wholly to abandon the World, and give over all worldly buſineſſes and imployments. For grace and a worldly calling may very well ſtand together; yea, a man may be a ſincere, holy Chriſtian, and yet a great Dealer in the World: nay, grace ingageth a man to be a good Husband, to improve the Eſtate God hath beſtowed on him: But yet we ought not inſatiably to deſire, and inordinately to hunt after Riches, as if they were the only things, or the great things to be ſought after; this is Covetouſneſs. It is not the having of Riches, but the immoderate deſiring and loving of them, and

over-

over-valuing them, which denominates a man *Covetous*. A man may have much of this Worlds goods, and yet be no Worldling: And another may have little, and yet be Covetous. This ſin is eſpecially in the heart.

Q. May not a godly man deſire Riches, ſeeing they are often in Scripture termed Bleſſings, which God hath promiſed as a Reward of his Service?

A. There is a moderate deſire of Riches which is lawful; and an immoderate, or inordinate deſire, which is unlawful. Then is our deſire of Riches moderate, when we deſire no more than is needful, and can be content to want that, when God will have it ſo.

Q. What may be accounted needful?

A. 1. That which is meet for the ſtate and calling wherein God hath ſet us.

2. That which is requiſite for the charge committed to us. As if a man have a Wife, and Children, and Servants, or Kindred lying upon his charge, what is needful and ſufficient for them, may be deſired and ſought after.

3. That which is needful for the future livelihood and maintenance of Wife and Children, may lawfully be deſired and ſought after. The Apoſtle layeth it down as a duty, *that Parents ought to lay up for their Children*, 2 Cor. 12. 14.

Beſides this moderate deſiring and ſeeking after Riches, there is an immoderate deſiring, and inordinate ſeeking after them. As when a man is not content with that portion which God by his Providence doth afford unto him, but inſatiably thirſts after more: And rather than fail of his deſire, will both neglect his God, and his Soul, and alſo venture on the uſe of any unlawful means, as lying, ſwearing, falſe weights and meaſures, with the like, for accompliſhing the ſame; which is wickedneſs in any, but eſpecially in ſuch as make a profeſſion of Religion.

Yet how many Profeſſors are there in our days, who though they pretend much love to Chriſt, yet by their practice it appears, that their love of Riches is greater and ſtronger than their love of him?

1. For how are their thoughts more upon the World, and

and the things thereof, than on Chriſt? No ſooner are they awake from their ſleep, but the World preſently takes poſſeſſion of their hearts; and their thoughts are upon their Eſtate, how they may increaſe the ſame, and that with unwearied care and labour; when every little that is done for Chriſt is a wearineſs to them.

2. How do their diſcourſes run out more upon their Riches, than on Chriſt? Yea, with what freedom and delight do they talk of their wealth, and of the means of getting and increaſing the ſame? And ſcarce a word of Chriſt all the day long. Which doth clearly diſcover the covetouſneſs which lieth in their hearts; for *out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh.* As the Door-keeper ſaid unto *Peter*, *Thou art ſurely of* Galilee, *for thy ſpeech bewrayeth thee.* So whoſoever ſhall make the World the whole matter and ſubject of his diſcourſe, it may be truly ſaid of him, *He is a Citizen of the World, for his ſpeech bewrayeth him.*

3. How eager and keen are their deſires after the Riches of this World? or at leaſt after a further portion, and proviſion for themſelves, Wives, and Children?

4. How do they toyl and labour, ſpending their ſweat and ſtrength in ſeeking after Riches? thinking no care and ſtudy too much, nor pains too great, for increaſing their wealth and ſtore. How do they riſe earlier for their worldly buſineſſes, than for their prayers, or any ſpiritual exerciſes?

5. How do they ſuffer the World to take up ſo much of their precious time, that they can ſcarce find any leiſure either for Cloſet-Devotions, or Family-prayers? but make their Religion give place to their worldly buſineſſes. And when at any time they fall upon the performance of holy duties, how are their hearts in that very time taken up with worldly thoughts and imaginations? So that inſtead of converſing with God in his holy Ordinances, and enjoying communion with him therein, they converſe with the World, and hold communion with the Devil.

O what a ſhame is it for ſuch as are brought out of darkneſs into marvellous light, having their underſtandings inlightned with the knowledge of God, and of his Son

Son Jeſus Chriſt, and are able to diſcern the Myſteries of godlineſs, that they ſhould ſet their hearts and affections upon baſe and tranſitory things! that they ſhould lay out themſelves ſo much in the purſuit of them! and never think they have laid up ſufficient of theſe earthly treaſures! What a ſhame is it for ſuch as profeſs themſelves the Sons of God, to live like Sons of Men! as if their portion and happineſs were only in this life: That they who profeſs themſelves Heirs to an Heavenly Inheritance, ſhould ſo much dote upon earthly things! what a ſhame is it for ſuch as have reaſonable ſouls, capable of an everlaſting life, and of communion with God both here and hereafter, ſhould ſo far debaſe their natures, as to live like Moles and Worms in the Earth, and to root like Swine in mud and dung!

Oh how doth it concern you, daily to humble your ſelves for this ſin, and to loath and abhor it, and watch againſt it for the time to come! For as every evil is to be abhorred, ſo eſpecially ſuch as are diſgraceful to the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, and to the Religion which you profeſs. Let us all therefore who have given our names unto Chriſt, labour to mortifie this ſin in us: Let us uſe this World, and the things thereof, as if we uſed them not; neither in our judgments eſteeming, nor in our hearts affecting, nor in our practice ſeeking them before ſpiritual grace and heavenly glory.

That we may be the better quickned up thereunto, let us oft conſider the manifold miſchiefs that do uſually follow and accompany this ſin of covetouſneſs.

I. *It is the Root of all Evil*, 1 Tim. 6. 10. There is no evil which a covetous man will forbear; his covetouſneſs will put him upon the acting and committing all manner of ſin that will ſerve his greedy deſign: It will make a man turn the day of Sacred Reſt into a day of bodily labour: It will make him uſe wicked ballances, and deceitful weights: *For this they are full of violence and lies*, ſaith the Prophet *Micah*, Mic. 6. 11, 12. It oft-times raiſeth Wars, and ſets the World together by the ears: It occaſioneth the neglect both of our own and others ſouls: It inticeth us into Hell for the ſake of living plentifully on earth: It cauſeth Parents to neg-

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lect the Souls of their Children, and Children to wish the death of their Parents: It maketh people to hate their Miniſters, and Miniſters to neglect their people.

II. *Covetouſneſs alienates the Soul of man from God*, and that ſeveral ways; as,

1. *From the thought of God: For God is not in all his thoughts*, Pſal. 10. 4. When he awakes in the night, his mind is wholly taken up with worldly matters, without a thought of God, or of any good thing. When he is following the works of his calling, how is he wholly drowned, and ſwallowed up therein!

2. *It alienates the Soul of man from the love of God: For if any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 15.

3. *It alienates the Soul of man from attending upon God in his Ordinances.* As you may ſee in the invited Gueſts in the Parable, whoſe eager deſire after the things of this World, kept them from coming to the Wedding Feaſt.

III. *Covetouſneſs makes a man unthankful for his preſent ſtate and condition, though in it ſelf an Eſtate very full and comfortable.* His mind is ſo much upon what he hath not, that he neither takes notice, nor taſts the ſweetneſs of what he hath: His full Veſſel, in his own apprehenſion, is an empty Bottle. Finding no contentment in what he hath, he is full of murmuring and repining, that he hath not what he would have. Many a gracious poor man, that hath little of this Worlds goods, hath oftentimes more ſatisfaction and contentment in his little, than he that hath the greateſt Earthly Revenues, in all his abundance.

IV. *Covetouſneſs works the heart to a mean and low eſteem of things ſpiritual and heavenly.* From ſuch as love the World, and the things thereof over-much, Chriſt to be ſure hath love little enough: Their eyes are ſo blinded, that they ſee not his Beauty; and their Pallat ſo diſtempered, that they taſte not his ſweetneſs: And therefore, with *Eſau*, prefer a Meſs of Pottage before a Birth-right: and with the men of *Shechem*, prefer the *Bramble* before the *Vine*, the *Olive*, and the *Fig-tree*. Worldly men prefer theſe poor empty things, the

the Brambles of the World, before Jesus Christ the true and living Vine; yea, and above the blessed Birthright of Gods New-born Children.

Covetousness depriveth a man of the comfort of what he hath, and possesseth: For the having of all is as nothing to him, that hath an immoderate desire after more. *Ahab's* Crown and Kingdom yielded him no comfort after he had set his heart upon poor *Naboth's* Vineyard. The want of this did more molest and vex him, than the enjoyment of his whole Kingdom did solace and comfort him. *For this he came heavy and displeased to his house, laid him down upon his bed, turned away his face, and would eat no bread,* 1 King. 21. 4.

V. *Covetousness exposeth men to manifold temptations, making them ready to yield to Satans wicked suggestions: They that will be rich,* saith the Apostle, 1 Tim. 6. 9. *fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which draw men into perdition.* As if he had said, They who set their hearts upon their Riches, whose hearts run after their covetousness, are fit for any temptation, ready to yield to any of Satans wicked suggestions, for the satisfying their covetous humour. *Judas* (as *Tertullian* thinks) was pretty honest till he carried the Bag, and that gave him occasion to discover the rottenness that was in his heart.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of living by Faith in Gods Promises.

VI. ANother singular Duty incumbent upon the Regenerate is, *To live by Faith,* casting themselves upon God in Christ, and upon his gracious Promises in all their straights and dangers, for such needful and useful things as they stand in need of. To live by Faith, is not only to believe in Christ for Salvation, but also firmly to rest and relye upon God, and his gracious Promises expressed in his Word, for support under all our tryals, for succour in all our distresses, for assistance against

againſt all aſſaults, for deliverance out of all our dangers, and for ſupply of all our wants, whether temporal or ſpiritual.

Thus did thoſe Ancient *Worthies* mentioned, *Heb.* 11. Where we read, that into whatſoever trouble or ſtraight they were brought, they ſo lived by Faith in Gods Promiſes, that nothing could diſmay them, much leſs overthrow them. And if thou in like manner couldſt but quietly reſt upon God, and his gracious Promiſes, thou wouldſt in thy greareſt tryals and troubles be *more than Conquerour*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh.

When therefore thou art troubled for thy ſins, groaning under the weight and burden of them, then throw thy ſelf upon the Merits and Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, and there let thy ſoul reſt it ſelf in hope of the pardon of thy ſins here, and of eternal life and ſalvation hereafter; venturing upon that comfortable Promiſe, *Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*, Mat. 11. 28.

When thou art aſſaulted with the temptations of Satan, and feareſt leſt thou ſhouldſt be overcome by them; then look up unto God, truſting in him for deliverance in due time, and for ſupport in the mean time, relying upon that gracious Promiſe, *God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it*, 1 Cor. 10. 13.

When thou art under any ſpiritual deſertion, ſitting in darkneſs, without any ſpark of comfort, then look up unto God with the Eye of Faith for the light of his countenance, and the aſſurance of his loving favour, reſting and refreſhing thy drooping ſoul with that comfortable Promiſe, *In a little wrath have I hid my face from thee, but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy on thee, ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer*, Iſa. 54. 8.

When thou apprehendeſt thy ſelf weak and inſufficient for the performance of duties, then look up unto God who hath promiſed *to help the weakneſſes and infirmities of his ſervants*; and truſt upon the power of Jeſus Chriſt; then wilt thou be able to ſay with the Apoſtle, *I can do all things through Chriſt which ſtrengtheneth me*, Phil. 4. 13.

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When thou feeleſt thy corruptions ſtrongly working and ſtirring in thee, then look up unto God who is able, and hath promiſed to ſubdue thine iniquities, and to keep down the power of thy luſts, laying hold on that good word, *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace*, Rom. 6. 14.

When thou art reviled and perſecuted by wicked and ungodly men, then look up unto God with the Eye of Faith, truſting in him for help and ſtrength, comforting thy ſelf with that gracious ſaying of our Saviour, *Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſly for my ſake: Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad; for great is your Reward in Heaven*, Mat. 5. 11, 12.

When thou art ſtreightned in theſe outward things, and thereupon art full of worldly fears and cares, what to eat, and what to drink, and what to provide for Wife and Children; then look up unto God, and *by Faith caſt all thy care upon him, who careth for thee*, reſting upon that comfortable Promiſe, Pſal. 34. 10. *The young Lyons do lack, and ſuffer hunger; but they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.* Though thou mayſt not have that abundance and affluency which ſome others do enjoy, yet thou ſhalt not want that which God ſeeth good for thee, *who will ſupply all thy need according to his riches*, Phil. 4. 19.

Thus in all thy ſtreights and diſtreſſes thou mayſt by the Soveraign Power of Faith, working upon the gracious Promiſes of God, exceedingly revive and refreſh thy troubled Spirit: For all the Promiſes of God ſet down in his Word for thy comfort and ſupport, being ſealed with the Blood of Chriſt, are all *Yea* and *Amen*, as true as Truth it ſelf; and therefore ſhall aſſuredly in their due time be accompliſhed.

For thy better incouragement to this Chriſtian Duty of *living by Faith*, ſeriouſly weigh theſe few things:

I. *The Properties of God*; more eſpecially,

1. *His Almighty Power*, whereby he is able to ſtrengthen thee in all thy weakneſſes, to ſupport thee under all thy tryals, and temptations; in a word, to perform whatſoever he hath promiſed. This made *Abraham* with

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ſtrong confidence to reſt upon the Promiſe of God, which the Apoſtle thus ſetteth forth, *Rom.* 4. 20, 21. *He ſtaggered not at the Promiſe of God through unbelief, but was ſtrong in Faith; being fully perſwaded, that what he had promiſed, he was able to perform.* *Abraham's* Eying the *Power of God* was it that made him ſo confidently to reſt upon his Promiſe.

2. *His truth and faithfulneſs in performing what he hath promiſed:* For ſaith the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, *Faithful is he that promiſeth*, Heb. 10. 32. We read how under the Law God commanded by *Moſes* concerning him that voweth or promiſeth any thing to the Lord, *that he ſhall not break his word, but ſhall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth*, Deut. 30. 2. And ſhall the Lord ſay, and not do it? Shall he promiſe, and not perform it? Surely it is as poſſible for him not to be, as not to keep his word, and not to perform what he hath promiſed.

Indeed the Lord many times maketh his Children wait long for the accompliſhment of his Promiſes; yet he never faileth to be as good as his word: which duly conſidered, cannot but ſtrengthen our Faith in the firm expectation of all good things promiſed, and inable us quietly and contentedly to reſt and repoſe our ſelves in God for the accompliſhment of what he hath promiſed, and not to doubt thereof, though he ſeem long to defer the performance of them.

3. *His Infinite Wiſdom*, whereby he diſpenſeth the good things contained in his Promiſes, in their fitteſt time and ſeaſon, when as they ſhall make moſt for his own glory, and his Childrens good. Far be it therefore from us to preſcribe unto God the time and ſeaſon for the performance of his Promiſes. But let us rather reſolve with patience to wait his appointed time and ſeaſon, who is infinite in wiſdom, and ſo knoweth what is beſt and convenient for us, even better than we our ſelves. Thus did the Church, *Our eyes wait upon the Lord our God until he have mercy upon us*, Pſal. 123. 4. Therefore as the Lord ſpeaketh by the Prophet *Iſay*, Iſa. 28. 16. *He that believeth ſhall not make haſte*, becauſe he is aſſured by Faith, that though he have not

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the thing he deſireth at his own time, yet he ſhall have it in that time which God in his wiſdome knoweth to be beſt for him, when as it ſhall make moſt for his good.

II. Take notice of the particular fruits of living by Faith recorded in Scripture, ſome whereof are theſe,

1. *Protection from things hurtful.* Though *Daniel* was caſt into a Den of Lions, yet it is ſaid, *that no manner of hurt was found in him*, Dan. 6. 23. And this reaſon is rendred thereof, *Becauſe he believed in God's Word*: by Faith relying on his power, whom he knew was able to deliver him.

2. *Proviſion of needful good things.* Therefore the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. exhorteth to *truſt in the living God*, and that on this ground, *he giveth us richly all things to enjoy*: namely all ſuch things as he in his Wiſdome ſeeth to be needful for us. And to ſet out God's bounty in providing for ſuch as live by Faith in his promiſes, the *Wiſe man* ſaith, *Prov.* 28. 25. *He that putteth his truſt in the Lord ſhall be made fat*, that is, he ſhall not only have ſuch a competency, as is abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve life, or to keep body and ſoul together; but alſo ſuch plenty and abundance, as will make him fat, and well-liking.

3. *Comfort in every Condition*, is another fruit of living by Faith in God's promiſes. The promiſes of God in his Word are the *Chriſtians Cordials*, to cheer up his fainting ſpirits, when he is ready to ſink. They are his *Aqua-vitæ*, to revive him when he is ready to ſound. They are *breaſts of Conſolation*, full of ſweet nouriſhment for the faint and weak. They are *ſacred and ſure Anchors*, in the tempeſtuous ſeaſons of trouble and affliction, to ſtay and fix Believers amidſt all toſſings whatſoever. They are *Roſes* that blow in the Winter, which with their fragrancy revive drooping and dejected ſouls, in the ſad Winter of their deſertion, when the verdure of all other comforts wither, and drop like leaves that are bitten with the froſt. This *David* found in his own experience, for, ſaith he, *thy promiſes are my comfort in my affliction, for thy Word hath quickened me*, Pſal. 119. 50.

4. *Contentment in our preſent ſtate and condition*, is ano-

ther fruit of living by Faith. A Believer is like a *dye* that hath four ſquares, throw it which way you will, it falls upon a bottome. Let God caſt a Believer into what condition he pleaſeth, he ſtill falleth upon his bottom of contentment, he will be contented with his preſent ſtate, believing it to be ordered by God as in Wiſdom, ſo in much mercy and goodneſs unto him.

CHAP. XIX.

Of Heavenly-mindedneſs.

VII. *Another ſingular duty incumbent upon the Regenerate, is to be ſpiritually minded by a frequent contemplation of ſpiritual and heavenly things.* It is not ſome few flitting, tranſient thoughts on God or Heaven, wherein this duty conſiſts: but thoughts reſting and fixing on ſome ſpiritual ſubject. The truth is the thoughts of all men fly up and down like birds in the air, or chaff in the wind; and ſome of theſe may light ſometimes on God or Heaven: but they are ſoon off, and fixed on ſome worldly matter, or ſome inpertinences or other: and therefore cannot denominate a man to be ſpiritually-minded: which is another manner of buſineſs than many are aware of. *It's a thinking with thought upon thought, a reiteration and multiplication of the thoughts of the mind upon God, and the things of God, and this in order to the affecting the heart deeply with them.*

It is not ſufficient to think and think oft of the love and goodneſs of God, but we muſt labour to get our hearts inflamed with a love unto him again. It is not ſufficient to think and think often of ſin, and the miſery it hath implunged us in; but we muſt ſo think thereof, as to work our hearts to an hatred of ſin, and a fear of that wrath of God it hath expoſed us, and made us liable to, and to a looking after Jeſus Chriſt, who alone can free us from the guilt of our ſins, and from the puniſhment due unto us for the ſame.

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This is a work of ſo geat concernment and advantage, as none can truely apprehend, but ſuch as have made tryal therein. *David* who was a man full of holy and Heavenly affections, was full of Heavenly meditation. And from the experience of that abundant ſweetneſs and comfort he found therein, doth often in his book of *Pſalms* commend it unto others; and pronounceth that man *bleſſed, who meditates in the Law of God day and night.* Pſal. 1. 2.

Let thy Soul full often ſoar aloft upon the wings of divine contemplation. Let not any ſolitary ſeaſon paſs away without ſome ſpiritual meditation and conference with thy God. Either take a ſorrowful ſurvey of thy manifold ſins, which may draw from thee as hearty grief for the ſame, ſo hearty ejaculations for the pardon and forgiveneſs of them. Or take a view of God's bleſſings and favours towards thee; and let this inlarge and raiſe up thine heart in praiſes and thankſgivings unto him. Or bath thy ſelf in an admiring commemoration of the meritorious blood of the immaculate Lamb Chriſt Jeſus, which was abundantly ſhed for the waſhing of thy body and ſoul ſtom the filthy ſpots and ſtains of ſin. Seriouſly think what he hath done and ſuffered for thee; how he hath fulfilled the Law, and undergone the puniſhment due to thy ſins; and now in Heaven maketh interceſſion for thee, by preſenting himſelf an alſufficient ſacrifice unto his Father for thy ſins. O think with thy ſelf, what thou muſt have ſuffered for thy ſins, if he had not ſuffered for them. What thou hadſt been if he had not redeemed thee, even a bondſlave of Satan and fire-brand of hell.

Eſpecially, let thy ſoul full often meditate on the glorious things which the Lord hath reſerved in Heaven for ſuch as here do ſincerely ſerve him, and obey the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt. Oh think with thy ſelf what a bleſſed thing it will be, to live in the viſion and fruition of God himſelf: in whoſe preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures for evermore. As alſo what an happineſs it will be to behold the glorious body of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhining there with ſuch incomprehenſible beauty, as ſhall infinitely delight the eyes of

the beholders, and that to all Eternity, without ſatiety: for the longer the Saints behold Chriſt, the more they will be raviſhed with Joy and delight. Ponder likewiſe as on the excellent qualities wherewith thy ſoul and body ſhall be adorned in Heaven, ſo on the excellency of that place, which is ſet forth in Scripture by Pearls and Precious Stones.

And the more to ſet off this glory and bleſſedneſs, oft conſider with thy ſelf the deplorable ſtate of the damned in hell, who feel nothing for the preſent but wrath and vengeance: and can expect nothing for the future but the fuller vials of Gods indignation to be poured on them to all Eternity.

Such conſiderations as theſe will ſerve as notable helps to draw and keep thy heart Heaven-ward, and to turn all the ſtreams of thy deſires and longings towards the God of glory. But oh, how many Chriſtians are there, who having an hope towards God, and ſome confidence of their intereſt in things above, do notwithſtanding converſe but very little with them? Their thoughts are ſeldome on Heaven or heavenly things; that notwithſtanding all their confidence, they may well queſtion whether their treaſure be there.

Conſider, Reader, as before the Lord, whether this be not thine own caſe. Thou canſt not be ignorant that an heart eſtranged from Heaven hath little evidence that he hath any part or place therein. And wilt thou yet perſwade thy ſelf that God is thine, when thou careſt no more for him? Doſt thou highly prize an heavenly mind, and account them the beſt and the happieſt Chriſtians, that are much in Heaven? and yet is it not grievous to thee to find that thou didſt never in all thy life, it may be, or but very ſeldome, fix thy thoughts thereon for a quarter of an hour together? but haſt many and many a time ſuffered the Devil to run away with thy thoughts, and to detain them on this dunghil below.

Certainly it were better the Devil had power to run away with thine eſtate, than with thy thoughts, and to order their motions at his pleaſure. Oh the multitude of worldly and covetous thoughts! of wanton and unclean thoughts! of proud and ambitious thoughts! of wicked

wicked and prophane thoughts! yea of blaſphemous and atheiſtical thoughts, that lodge in the hearts of moſt of us, and there revel it day and night! Oh the ſpeculative filthineſs, and contemplative uncleanneſs, that not onely harbours, but likewiſe find hearty welcome and entertainment there!

Surely friend thou hadſt beſt look to thy ſelf, and get thy heart cleared of theſe evil gueſts, thy vile and vain thoughts: drive away theſe Birds of prey, and then the thoughts of God will be more familiar and precious to thee. That thou maiſt get up to this heavenly mindedneſs, take theſe directions.

1. *Humble thy ſelf unfeignedly for thy great ſtrangeneſs to God and Heaven, that thou haſt ſo rarely ſet thine heart on things above.* And for the time to come let it be thy ſpecial care and endeavour to habituate thy ſelf to ſpiritual and heavenly Meditations, frequently to ſteep thy ſoul in heavens delights.

2. *When thou findeſt thy mind and thoughts to be ridden by the Devil, and carried away from God, lift up thine heart by earneſt and fervent prayer unto him,* who is the *Father of Spirits,* and hath power over Devils; and beg of him, that as by his permiſſion he hath ſuffered the unclean Spirit to enter into thee: ſo he would command him ſpeedily to depart from thee, that thy mind may be free for its proper work. For he only can *caſt down imaginations, and every thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt,* 2 Cor. 10. 5.

3. *Work thy heart to a perfect deteſtation of all vain and wicked thoughts,* that thou maiſt be able to ſay with *David, I hate vain thoughts,* Pſal. 119. 113. This will highten thy reſolutions to a greater watchfulneſs againſt them for the time to come, and to uſe thine utmoſt endeavour to drive them away, ſo that though they may ariſe in thy heart; yet they may not lodge there. And know this for thy comfort, that thoſe vain and wicked thoughts, which thou doſt from thy heart hate and deteſt, ſhall not be laid to thy charge, at the great day of account,

4. *Above all things keep a watch over thine heart*; ac-

cording to that counſel of the Wiſeman, *Prov.* 4. 23. *Keep thine heart with all diligence.* As if he had ſaid, above all keeping keep thy heart: which is like a City liable every moment both to outward aſſaults and inward commotions. Not onely Satan thine Arch enemy is ever watchful for an opportunity to caſt therein his fiery darts and ſenſual objects: but there are alſo many rebellious ſtirrings within, which ſpring from the fountain of original corruption, over which thou muſt eſpecially watch; and diſmiſs them with loathing and deteſtation. If vain and wanton thoughts be not ſtifled in the conception, what monſtruous wickedneſs may they not bring forth? How great a Fire may theſe little ſparks kindle.

5. *Wean thy heart and affections more and more from Worldly cares and pleaſures,* which clog the ſoul that it cannot mount aloft. As a Bird whoſe wings are limed, is not able to take her flight on high. So the man whoſe heart is intangled with the cares of this life and the pleaſures of ſin, will not be able to get above ground: the wings of holy Meditation will not raiſe it on high. Yea, ſuch a carnal and earthly mind is altogether unfit for Heavenly Meditation, and very backward and unwilling to it. What better reaſon can be given why many think ſo little of God, his Word and Works, or of any good thing, but becauſe their hearts are ſo full of the World, and their affections ſet ſo much upon the ſame: *where their treaſure is, there will their hearts alſo be.*

6. *Be often lifting up thine heart to Heaven in ſome ſpiritual ejaculations, eſpecially in the morning.* Such as find themſelves ſubject to wind in their ſtomachs through emptineſs, uſe before they go forth, to take a mornings draught. And as great need is there for ſuch as are ſubject to vain, wanton, worldly thoughts, every morning to prepoſſeſs their hearts with the thoughts of God, of his glorious Majeſty, his omnipreſence, and omniſcience, his purity, juſtice, and the like. And not only mornings, but throughout the day when ever thou findeſt vain or wicked thoughts to ariſe at any time within thee, meet them preſently with a prayer; lift

lift up thine heart in ſome ſhort ejaculatory requeſt unto God, for power and ſtrength to keep down and ſuppreſs the ſame,

7. *Labour to ſpiritualize every outward occurrence by raiſing Heavenly Meditations from the ſame.* There is not any Creature thou beholdeſt, or any thing that befals thee, but thou maiſt make ſome ſpiritual uſe, and improvement thereof. As the *Bee* ſucks honey out of every flower; ſo maiſt thou extract ſpiritual and holy thoughts from every thing thou ſeeſt, and beholdeſt; yea from all occurrences and emergencies; which will be a ſpecial means to prevent the Devil and Luſt, and to keep out thoſe vanities and wickedneſſes, which otherwiſe would fill thine head and heart withal.

8. *Labour to get thine heart furniſhed with the knowledge of God and his Word,* which will take up thine heart with better things, and leave no room for theſe unclean birds. As the emptineſs of the ſtomach maketh it ſubject to windineſs; ſo it is the emptineſs of our hearts that make them ſo full of vain fooliſh thoughts. *A good man,* ſaith our Saviour, *out of the good treaſure of his heart bringeth forth good things,* Mat. 12. 35. A good man having his heart furniſhed with a treaſure of many precious truths, bringeth forth good thoughts, as well as good things. When thou art walking or riding alone, call to mind ſome ſpiritual ſubject or ſavoury truth whereon to meditate: bring forth out of thy treaſury, and let thy heart be continually working upon thoſe good things thou haſt there laid up.

9. *So often as thou goeſt unto God in Prayer, let one Petition be for mortifying grace,* to conquer thoſe ſinful Luſts and vile affections, which are apt to ſteam up into thine head with anſwerable thoughts; and that he would make thee more heavenly minded, by working in thine heart better affections. Nothing but the power of God can cure us of the vanity of our thoughts, and make them ſuch as may be acceptable unto him.

In regard that the beſt of God's people do find a great backwardneſs and untowardneſs in themſelves to the performance of this Heavenly duty: I ſhall give you

ſome *Motives* thereunto, which if ſeriouſly weighed, may through God's bleſſing prove effectual to perſwade you to be more ſpiritually minded.

I. May be taken from the *poſſibility* of the work. Indeed the work is ſomewhat difficult, yet is it poſſible; it's that you have power to do. Though you have not that command of your affections, you cannot love what you will, nor hate what you will, or grieve when you will? yet can you not think on what you will? And by how much more able you are to do it, by ſo much the greater your ſin is, if you neglect it.

II. Conſider the neceſſity of this duty. The mind of man being active, if it be not exerciſed on ſpiritual and holy things, it will be on things earthly and carnal. The truth is whoſoever doth not accuſtome himſelf to fix his thoughts on God, or his Word, or ſome ſpiritual ſubject, will be ſure to find them taken up with things of leſs concernment, yea of dangerous and ſad conſequence; from which they will reap nothing but corruption, and defilement. By how much our minds ſtray from God, and pitch upon other things, the more will they grow into the form of the Devil. *They have gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain*, Jer. 2. 5.

III. Conſider the *manifold Benefits* which uſually follow thereupon.

1. God will be ſure to mind them, who mind him. *Then they that feared the Lord ſpake often one to another, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and thought on his name*, Mal. 3. 16. Not a thought of God but it is regiſtred in his Book of remembrance. The more we look up unto God, the more he will look down upon us for our good. When thoughts of God are ſtirring in us, God himſelf is not far off, he will come and enter. Oh how happy are thoſe ſouls in whom God comes, and takes up his habitation!

2. *A clearer Apprehenſion of divine Truths.* Though we hear often, and read much, yet if we digeſt not thoſe truths we meet with, by Meditation, we ſhall ſtill continue in the dark. Our knowledge at the beſt will be

but

but weak, and inefficacious. Whereas by a frequent thinking of those truths which we hear or read, we shall have a clearer apprehension of them, and they will be concocted into better nourishment.

3, *An heavenly conversation.* The mind being the fountain of actions such as the mind is, such is the life, and conversation. If the mind be holy and Heavenly, such will the life be. But if the mind be carnal and unclean, the conversation will be hereafter. Wouldst thou have an Heavenly conversation? then must thou be Heavenly minded. Thoughts are the seed and conception of all our actions, and such as the seed is, such will be the fruit. As evil thoughts bring forth evil actions, so Heavenly thoughts bring forth an Heavenly conversation.

4. *Readiness to discourse on divine misteries.* As they who have layed up much riches, have sufficient by them, to bring forth on all occasions: so such as by frequent meditation have treasured up many precious truths, have sufficient by them to produce, for the benefit of those they converse withal. Whereas others who have spent much time in reading, and hearing, and have not by meditation made it their own, we see how barren they are. *I will meditate, saith David, of all thy works, and talk of thy doings*, Psal. 77. 12. It is there observable, how good conference follows upon holy meditation.

5. *Chearfulness of Spirit.* To be much in Heaven by a frequent contemplation of things above, will exceedingly chear up our Spirits, and make us walk comfortably. For the proof hereof I dare appeal to the experience of any Heavenly-minded Christian. When is it that your hearts are most chearful? but when you have been walking with God, and beholding his Face, and looking to those things that are within the vail. Certainly this will leave such a savour upon the heart of a Christian, that he cannot but confess, that one hour thus spent, doth afford more true real joy and sweetness, than all the riches and pleasures in the World.

6. *Another benefit of divine contemplation, is a profitable*

ble improvement of time. For thereby all the chinks, and crevices of our time will be filled up. There need be no vacuity, when we have work that is ſo proper for every ſeaſon; yea and that will whet and quicken us, to what ever other work God hath for us to do. The moſt contemplative Chriſtians are the moſt active. Our holy thoughts will ſet us upon our holy work! the thoughtleſs are uſually the moſt fruitleſs of men.

7. *Victory over our luſts and corruptions, is another benefit of divine contemplation.* It is recorded of *Noah*, that though he lived in wicked and corrupt times, yet he was *a juſt and upright man*, Gen. 6. 9. The reaſon thereof is rendred in the next words, *He walked with God*, continually eying him, and meditating of him. By his frequent converſing with God, he kept himſelf from the iniquities of the times, as well as from the corruptions of his own heart. And certainly there is no better preſervative againſt ſin, then to have our minds and thoughts thus holily imployed about ſpiritual things. For,

1. By looking into our ſelves, and conſidering our own hearts and wayes, we diſcern the evils that are there: we ſee ſuch worldlineſs and Covetouſneſs in our hearts, the very ſight whereof will make us look the better to our ſelves.

2. By ſpiritual meditation we come to have ſuch an inſight into the evil of ſin, the vanity of the Creature, the folly of fleſhly ſenſual delights: that temptations unto ſin will have the leſs power over us.

3. Divine Contemplation is a preſervative againſt ſin, becauſe it keeps the heart imployed. When the heart is taken up with better things, it hath no leaſure to hearken to temptations; no leaſure to be luſtful and wanton; to be worldly or ambitious. When we are idle and empty of God, we are ſure to be peſtred with evil thoughts: whilſt we are well imployed, we are ſafe. When the Veſſel is full, you can put in no more. And when the heart is filled with Heaven, there is no room for Earth and Vanity. What's the reaſon moſt mens hearts are ſo full of wicked wanton thoughts?

thoughts, but becauſe God is not in all their thoughts.

4. Divine Contemplation is a good preſervative againſt ſin, in that our underſtandings are thereby cleared, to judge rightly of our ſinful luſts and pleaſures. When a Chriſtian hath been ſeriouſly muſing either on thoſe everlaſting joys, which are prepared for the Godly in Heaven: or on thoſe everlaſting torments, which are prepared for the Wicked in Hell, what then are his apprehenſions of his luſts and iniquities? O how doth he befool himſelf for them, when he ſees what he is like to loſe and ſuffer by them! How could he even tear his very fleſh, and take revenge on himſelf, for his earthly mindedneſs, and fleſhly pleaſures! for his miſ-ſpent time, that he hath ſo prodigally laviſhed, and wofully waſted his golden and precious time, in vanity and pleaſure, in ſin and wickedneſs! How verily doth he think there is no man in *Bedlam* ſo truely mad, as they, who for the ſhort fruition of a momentary pleaſure, and delight here, do plunge themſelves into everlaſting burnings in hell, where is nothing but weeping and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth!

CHAP. XX.

Of Mortification.

VIII. ANother ſingular duty incumbent upon the Regenerate is, *To labour in the uſe of all good means, for the mortification of the whole body of ſin, with all its affections and luſts, eſpecially thoſe we feel moſt predominant in us.* True mortification extendeth it ſelf to the whole of ſin, body and members, root and branch; even every ſinful luſt. *Mortifie therefore your Members which are upon the Earth,* ſaith the Apoſtle, Col. 3. 5. Where by *Members on the Earth,* are meant the ſinful luſts and affections, which are as the members of that monſtrous body of ſin; which is evident by the particular inſtances in the Words following, namely *Fornication, Un-*

uncleaneſs, *inordinate Affections*, and the like. Theſe muſt be *mortified*, that is, killed and deſtroyed. The Regenerate by the Spirit of God are enabled as to reſtrain the actings of ſin, ſo by degrees to deaden the root. Indeed this is not done to the uttermoſt while here we live, I mean, ſin is not here ſo mortified and deſtroyed, that it hath no reſidence, nor activity in our hearts; yet may it be ſo weakned and ſubdued, as to loſe its vigor, power and ſtrength, and languiſh away more and more. Though corruption keep *poſſeſſion in us*, after we are Regenerate, yet hath it not *dominion over us*: though we may be ſins *Captives*, yet ſhall we not be ſins *Subjects*, to yield a voluntary ſubjection of our ſelves unto the commands of ſin.

Q. How may we know when corruption is mortified in us?

A. When it is not onely reſtrained, and kept from ordinary breakings out into actual ſins: but the luſts and motions that iſſue from it, are a grief to us: yea we hate and deteſt them, and groan under the burden of them: we watch againſt them, fight againſt them, earneſtly deſiring to be delivered from them, crying out with the Apoſtle, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of ſin and corruption*, Rom.7.24.

For the more profitable preſſing this ſo neceſſary and difficult a duty, I ſhall,

1. Shew you ſome *Motives* and arguments to enforce the ſame.
2. Some *Means* whereby it may be effected.
3. The *Manner* how it ought to be performed.

The *Reaſons* forcing this work of Mortification upon the Regenerate are theſe,

1. After Regeneration there remaineth a body of ſin and corruption in the beſt which if we endeavour not, by the help of Gods Spirit, to mortifie and ſubdue, will gather ſtrength, and become mighty to the great hinderance of our duty, and darkning all our comfort.

2. Corruption doth not onely remain in us as long as we live in this World, but it is always in continual work:

work: either ſtirring us up to evil, or keeping us from that which is good, or defiling our beſt actions. In which reſpect, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 5. 17. *the fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit:* And from his own experience he cryeth out, *I ſee another Law in my members, warring againſt the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of ſin, which is in my members; ſo that I cannot do the good which I would, but rather do the evil which I hate,* Rom. 7. 23. How doth it then concern us, daily and hourly to fight, and ſtrive againſt theſe luſts, which are continually working, and warring in our members, hindering and ſpoiling all our duties, breaking our peace, undermining all our hopes and comforts, and ſeeking our lives: we muſt either kill or be killed,

3. By a conſcionable performance of this duty, we ſhall be freed from thoſe hainous and ſcandalous ſins, into which other mens luſts do carry them. Should corruption have its way and courſe without reſiſtance in the beſt of us, it would ſoon break forth into the moſt loathſome and diſgraceful ſins, that are committed by the very worſt of men; as we ſee in *David, Solomon,* and others. Is it not then needful for us to keep down, and withſtand the firſt motions and riſings of ſin in our hearts, before it break forth into ſuch wicked and diſgraceful acts, which will blaſt our credit and reputation, and bring a ſcandal upon our Religion and profeſſion?

4. Mortification of ſin was one ſpecial end of Chriſts death; who dyed to ſave his people from their ſins: not to ſave them *in their ſins,* but *from their ſins:* as from the guilt and puniſhment, ſo from the power of them. And indeed whom Chriſt delivers from the *damnation* of ſin, he firſt delivers alſo from the *dominion* of ſin. Whom he intends to ſave from hell, he firſt ſaveth them from iniquity: he ſaves their ſouls by killing their ſins.

If thou findeſt any luſt to remain unmortified in thee, bearing rule in thine heart, and ſway in thy life, thou haſt juſt cauſe to queſtion thy intereſt in Chriſt, and his ſalvation. *They that are Chriſts have crucified the fleſh, with the affections and luſts,* Gal. 5. 24.

II. The

II. The *Means* whereby the work of Mortification may be effected by us, are these,

I. When thou feelest corruption working in thee, and stirring thee up to evil, then call to mind, and lay to heart the ensuing considerations.

1. *Consider the shortness of the pleasure of sin, with the length of the punishment following thereupon, without true and unfeigned repentance*: The one for a moment, the other everlasting. The pleasure is but short, but the punishment is for ever and ever, The torments of the damned in hell are intensively most grievous in themselves: but that which mainly and infinitely adds to the greatness of them is, because they are *eternal. They are tormented day and night for ever and ever*, Rev. 20. 10. The Worm is alwayes gnawing, and the fire continually burning, therefore called *unquenchable fire*, Mat. 3. 12. Oh what a folly must it then needs be, yea and madness beyond admiration, for the short fruition of these perishing pleasures, and transient contentments here, to implunge our selves into everlasting burnings!

Oh how terrible is the thought of *eternity* in those tormenting flames? where the damned would think themselves happy, if after they had endured them so many thousand years, as there are Sands on the Seashore, or Stars in the Firmament, they might then be assured of enlargement. But when all that time is past, and innumeral millions of years, and ages are run out, they are as far from an end, as at their first entrance. Why wilt thou then purchase a little sensual delight at so dear a rate? for a *moments pleasure* to incur everlasting wo and misery? O the fire of hell, if thou wouldst send down thy thoughts thither, would burn up thy Lusts, which otherwise will be the fuel to burn thy soul.

2. *Consider thy extream folly in gratifying thy sinful Lusts*: thereby thou hast chosen and preferred thy fleshly pleasure, thy carnal content, before the glory of God, the everlasting joyes of Heaven, and the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Oh monstrous madness, and unconceiveable folly! at which the Angels

gels bluſh, and Heaven and Earth cannot but ſtand amazed.

3. *Call to mind and conſider ſome of the threatnings in Gods Word, as againſt ſin in general, ſo againſt that particular Luſt, which thou findeſt moſt working and ſtirring in thee, and unto which thou findeſt ſtrongeſt inclinations in thy ſelf.*

Firſt call to mind and conſider ſome of the threatnings againſt ſin and ſinners in general. *Upon the wicked,* ſaith the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 11. 6. *God ſhall rain fire and brimſtone and an horrible tempeſt, this ſhall be the portion of their cup.* And ſaith the Apoſtle, *Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doth evil,* Rom. 2. 8, 9.

Secondly, When thou findeſt any inclination in thy ſelf to a particular ſin, as unto *drunkenneſs,* ſeriouſly conſider that of the Wiſe man, *who hath woe? who hath ſorrow? who hath contentions,* &c. *they that tarry long at the wine, they that go to ſeek mixt wine,* Prov. 23. 29. When thou findeſt any inclination or temptation unto *uncleanneſs* ſeriouſly weigh that of the Apoſtle, *Be not deceived neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, ſhall inherit the Kingdome of God,* 1 Cor, 6. 9. And again, *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge,* Heb. 13.4. When thou findeſt any inclinations unto *Covetouſneſs,* call to mind that of the Prophet *Iſaiah, Wo unto them that joyn houſe to houſe, and lay field to field, till there be no place,* Iſa. 5. 8. And that of the Apoſtle, *The love of money is the root of all evil, which while ſome have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themſelves thorow with many ſorrows,* 1 Tim. 6. 10. As God hath in his Word denounced ſevere threatnings againſt many ſins, ſo a ſerious conſideration of them will be a ſpecial means to mortifie the ſame, and keep them, at leaſt from raigning in us.

4. *When thou feeleſt Corruption working and ſtirring in thee enticing thee to ſin, ſeriouſly conſider the manifold Sufferings and bitter Death of our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt on the Croſs.* : whereof our ſins were the cauſe. Theſe were they that lay heavy upon his ſoul, and made him exeeeding ſorrowful even to the death. Theſe were

were the thorns which pricked his temples, the whips which scourged his innocent body, and the nails which fastened his hands and feet to the Cross. And can we love our sins which kill'd our Saviour? we complain of *Judas* and of the *Jews* for crucifying him; and seem to hate them upon that account. But behold the *Judas* in thy heart and in thy life, thy sins these are the betrayers and murderers.

Oh never leave looking up to a crucified Christ, till thou feel and find, both arguments enough to engage thy heart against them, and vertue flow from him to the crucifying of them. To this end reason thus with thy self. Hath Christ paid for my Redemption his most precious Blood, and shall *I* sell my soul to sin again for this fleshly pleasure, or base profit? What is this but to crucifie the Lord of Life afresh? For know assuredly, so many sins as thou committest wittingly and with delight, so many thorns dost thou again fasten upon his head, so many nails dost thou drive into his hands and feet, so many spears dost thou thrust into his heart. Certainly a serious consideration of these things cannot but be a special means to set thee heartily upon this Work of Mortification.

5. *Consider how frail and mortal thou art, subject to death every moment; and wo be unto thee if thou die before thy sins be slain.* How darest thou adventure upon thy Lusts and the pleasures of Sin, when as thou maist suddenly be taken out of the land of the Living, and cast into Hell, while thou art acting thy wickedness? Even then when thou art blessing thy self in thy pleasures, or the gains of unrighteousness, thou maist hear that voice, *Thou fool this night thy soul shall be taken from thee.* Didst thou but seriously consider, as the certainty of thy death, so the uncertainty of the time thereof, thou wouldst not but be afraid of sinning once more, least God should strike thee dead in the very act, and thou have no time left for repentance. Oh pray with the Psalmist, *that God would teach thee to number thy dayes.* and this will make thee apply thine heart unto wisdome.

6. *Con-*

6. *Conſider that ſin will be thy deſtruction, and nothing beſides it can harm thee.* It is not in the power of all the men and Devils in the world to deſtroy the ſoul of any man. Temptations can do nothing but by the advantage of corruption; 'tis that wounds mortally our immortal ſpirit, and brings it into that curſed ſtate, where though it never dyeth, yet is it alwayes dying; though never quite dead, yet ever in the pangs of death.

Oh what prodigious cruelty muſt it then needs be, for ſuch things of nought, to betray thy precious ſoul to an eternal loſs! when as if thou wouldſt be perſwaded to ſecure this enemy, *Sin*, thou mighteſt live and be bleſſed, in ſpite of men and Devils. And wilt thou yet be in league with it? wilt thou let it live? Shall not thy ſoul be avenged of ſuch an enemy as this? Ariſe, ariſe, ſet upon thy ſins, upon them all, let not thy ſoul ſpare any one of them, give no quarter to them, let not any iniquity lodge in peace with thee one night more, leſt thou be a dead man before the morning,

Thus have I commended to thee ſeveral conſiderations to reſtrain thee from ſin, which by the help of God may ſerve to imbitter the ſweeteſt bait that draws thee to it, and to cool the heat of the moſt furious intices ments. When therefore thou feeleſt corruption working and ſtirring in thee, call to mind the forementioned conſiderations, fix thy thoughts on them, let them not go off, until they begin to have a powerful influence upon thy ſoul.

II. Another means on our part to be performed for the mortifying our ſinful Luſts is, *carefully to eſchew all occaſions of ſin, and temptations thereunto.* He who will dally with occaſions of ſin, is in danger of falling. He who will venture upon temptations unto wickedneſs, is not far from commiſſion of it. Obſerve therefore what occaſions and opportunities, what means and company have at any time given advantage to thy Luſt, to exert and put forth it ſelf; and flie from them as from Hell. This is a point of true ſpiritual wiſdom, to ſee ſin afar off in the occaſions of it; and by eſchewing the one, to prevent the other.

III. *Observe the first working of corruption in thine heart, and carefully suppress the same, not suffering it to get the least ground.* Do not say, thus far it shall go and no farther. Give sin an inch, and it will soon take an ell, as the proverb is. Lustful thoughts have oft-times ended in outward uncleanness, and actual Adultery. *From the heart,* saith our Saviour, Mat. 15. 19. *proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication,* &c. Noting evil thoughts to be the cause of the uncleanness in the life. In *Athaliahs* Massacre of the blood-royal, young *Joash* was hid in the bed-chamber, there he was nurst, and afterwards came to be King, and ruled in the Throne. Save any Lustful thought, nurse it in the bed-chamber of thy heart, hide it there, and it will in time come to be King, and rule over thee.

So soon therefore as any lustful or exorbitant thoughts begin to arise in thine heart, speedily reject the same: quench the fire in the thatch; crush the Cockatrice in the Egge: stifle the first conception of sin. Certainly as it is a dangerous neglect not to observe and embrace the first motions of Gods spirit in us: so likewise not to take notice of the first thoughts and rising of sin in our hearts. He who slights sinfull thoughts, is in a fair way to sinful actions. *They that are Christs,* saith the Apostle, Gal. 5. 24. *have Crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.* The very *affections and lusts* of the flesh must be Crucified, if we would prevent the *works* of the flesh.

IV. *Stir up in thy self an earnest desire to have thy lusts mortified and subdued.* The reason why no more is done against sin is, because we are too well contented to let it alone; when nothing but the death of sin will satisfie thee, thou wilt then use thy Weapons: when once thou desirest in earnest the destruction of thine iniquities, there's hope they will not be long liv'd. For God hath promised to satisfie the desire of those that fear him, he will hear their groanings and deliver them.

Come unto me, saith Christ, *all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you ease, and rest.* Certainly one special reason why many complain so much of the strength and prevalency of their corruptions is, because they

they are not heartily willing to have them mortified and ſubdued. They will indeed profeſs a willingneſs to part with their ſins, that they may be freed from the guilt of them, and puniſhment due unto them; but unwilling they are to part with the pleaſure they find in them. Thus *Auſtin* acknowledgeth of himſelf; *I prayed*, ſaid he, *that my ſins might be forgiven and mortified: but yet I was afraid leſt my prayer ſhould be heard and anſwered*, If therefore thou wouldſt have thy ſins mortified indeed, ſtir up in thy ſelf a willing mind thereunto.

V. *Complain unto God of the prevalency of thy luſts, and by prayer beg ſtrength from him againſt the power of them.* From God it is that ſtrengrh muſt be had, it is his power alone that can ſupport us againſt the power of ſin. And Prayer is the means of obtaining it. This was the courſe that *Paul* took, when he was troubled with that *thorn in his fleſh*, which Expoſitors generally enterpret to be ſome ſtrong motions and inclinations in him to ſome foul ſin. *For this*, ſaith the text, *he beſought the Lord thrice*, that is, oftentimes. And though he did not preſently obtain a full deliverance yet did he receive ſtrength ſufficient to reſiſt them, ſo that he could not be overcome by them.

If we in like manner ſhall go unto God by prayer for his help, laying open our condition, and complaining to him thereof; we ſhall for the preſent receive ſtrength ſufficient to reſiſt, and in Gods due time deliverance from our iniquities.

VI. *Act faith in Chriſt for the mortifying thy ſinful luſts, and corruptions.* To this end,

1. *Be ſenſible that thou art in thy ſelf weak, and unable to grapple with thy Luſts.* Thou muſt deſpair of thine own ſtrength, ere thou wilt take hold on the ſtrength of the Lord. Thou muſt be beaten out of thy ſelf-confidence, ere thou wilt go unto Chriſt. When thou ſeeſt thou art weak, thou wilt turn to the ſtrong hold.

2. *Believe that Chriſt is able to ſuccour and help thee. In him doth all fulneſs dwell.* As he hath a *fulneſs of grace* in his heart, ſo *fulneſs of power* in his hand, whereby he is able to kill all thine enemies. Sin is mighty, but

Christ is mightier. The Devil is strong, but Christ is stronger than he.

3. *Believe that Christ is as able, so willing to subdue thine iniquities.* Thine enemies are his enemies, and he will have their death: if thou be a believer, he hath undertaken for thee. He is thy great High Priest, and thy Lord and King; and hereupon not only by his mercifulness, and kindness; but by his office and interest he stands ingaged to pity and relieve thee: he will not be unfaithful to his trust, nor deaf to his own bowels, which plead with him to save and help thee.

4. *By faith cast thy self upon Jesus Christ, rest upon his power, and goodness for his help and strength.* 'Tis here in regard of Christs power, as in regard of his promises. As our resting and relying upon his promises in a time of danger and distress, makes them our own: So our resting and relying upon Christs power for help and support, doth make it our own.

5. *By faith wait upon Christ in expectation of relief, and succour, against the working and stirring of thy corruptions.* Though relefe come in but slowly from him, yet wait for it, because it will most surely come in the most seasonable time. Hereby wilt thou ingage Christ to appear for thy help. For as nothing doth more ingage the heart of a man to be helpful to another, than an expectation of help from him: So certainly the raising up thine heart to an expectation of relief from Christ, must needs be a great ingagement unto him to assist thee accordingly.

When Christ cured many of their bodily diseases and distempers while he lived upon the Earth, we find their cure is still ascribed to their faith. Now what was their faith? They believed that Christ was both able and willing to cure them, and thereupon with confidence went unto him for cure, and so drew vertue from him accordingly. This you may see in the poor Woman that had an issue of blood twelve years, who came behind Christ and said, Mat. 9. 20. *If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be whole.* To whom Christ replyed, *Daughter be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole.* This is writen as, all other Scripture is, for our learning,

ing, to teach and inſtruct us: what courſe to take for the curing of our ſpiritual maladies and diſeaſes.

Haſt thou any foul iſſue of Worldlineſs and Covetouſneſs, of pride or frowardneſs, of paſſion or envy, or the like running upon thee? And wouldſt thou be cured of them? Do as that poor Woman did: go unto Chriſt, ſet thy faith at work on him; believe his power and willingneſs, let thy faith touch but the hem of his garment, lay hold on him, caſt thy ſelf on his blood and bowels, wait at his door, reſolving not to return without a gracious anſwer, and then ſee if this be not his anſwer, *Son be of good comfort, thy ſins are forgiven, be thou cleanſed of all thy corruptions, thy faith hath made thee whole.*

Having ſhewed the *Means* whereby the work of Mortification may be effected. I come now to ſhew the *Manner* how it ought to be performed,

1. *Our Mortification muſt be ſpeedy.* Begin to day, let the axe be preſently laid to the root of theſe trees; and when ever you feel the Devil at work, blowing up the Coals of Luſt, be inſtantly in arms, give not time to ſin to get head upon thee, reſiſt it in its firſt motions and riſings. Delayes herein are very dangerous. That Luſt which at firſt may eaſily be overcome, afterwards will hardly be kept under.

Why ſhould we not be as wiſe for our ſouls, as we are for our bodies? who having fire caſt into his boſome or houſe, will not preſently caſt it out, and quench it? Woe to thoſe fools who let alone theſe helliſh fires, and trifle ſo long, till it hath gotten the maſtery. You whoſe Luſts are through your own neglect gotten up into a flame, fear leſt it be too late to quench them: fear leſt theſe fires having been neglected ſo long, ſhould now burn to the bottom of Hell.

Vain, wicked, wanton thoughts are evil ſeeds ſown in our hearts by our adverſary the Devil, which if they be let alone, will inviſibly grow up firſt into a blade, then to an eare, and ſo bring forth a diſmal harveſt of wickedneſs and wrath. And therefore our wiſeſt courſe muſt needs be, ſo ſoon as they are ſown, ſpeedily to weed, and pull them up by the roots. To which agreeth that of an Ancient *Vitia corporis non ſunt ſinenda coaleſcere; ſed*

in exordiis ſtatim enecanda ſunt. Hillar. Enarrat. in Pſalm. 36. *We muſt not ſuffer thoſe fleſhly vices to grow and increaſe, but rather deſtroy them in their firſt beginnings.*

2. *Our Mortification muſt be willing and voluntary, not forced and conſtrained.* The Marriner in a ſtorm, caſteth away his goods, becauſe he dares keep them no longer; yet ſtill his heart goeth after them. And this is all the the mortification of the moſt, they will caſt off their tranſgreſſions becauſe they dare do no other. Then only are we ſincere in this work, when our hearts are the firſt in all that oppoſition we make againſt our ſins: when we pray againſt them heartily; when we watch and wreſtle, and ſtrive, and reſiſt them with all our hearts: when our very ſouls long to ſee the blood of our Luſts; and if it were poſſible we might with ſafety, yet our hatred againſt them would not ſuffer them to live. They are like to do ſomething to purpoſe againſt ſin, whoſe hearts do give the firſt charge upon them.

3. Our Mortification muſt be *univerſal*, extending it ſelf to all our ſinful Luſts, with a ſincere purpoſe not to bear with our ſelves in any known ſin. For moſt certain it is, that true mortification, and an adviſed remaining in the practice of any known ſin cannot poſſibly ſtand together. Therefore the Prophet *David*, to teſtifie the truth of his Mortification, ſaith, Pſal. 119. 101. *I have refrained my feet*, not from one or two, but *from every evil way*, he did not willingly bear with himſelf in the practice of any one ſin; well knowing every ſin to be a tranſgreſſion of the Law. Theſe two words, Ἀνομία and ἁμαρτία *Sin* and *tranſgreſſion* are convertible. *Whoſoever committeth ſin*, ſaith the beloved Diſciple *John*, 1 Joh. 3. 4. *tranſgreſſeth the Law*, for *ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the Law*; yea *every ſin*, and ſo makes us lyable to the wrath of God, to all judgements and plagues here, and to eternal damnation hereafter. God will not ſpare that ſoul, that will have any one of his ſins ſpared to him. He that would have one ſin ſpared, would have another and another if it ſerved his turn. He that would not have all of Chriſt, would in truth have none of him. And he that would not be rid of all ſin, has no ſincere mind to be rid of any.

Chriſt

Chriſt will have all or nothing: every duty must be done, or as good you did none; every ſin muſt be left, or as good you kept them all. Canſt thou let all ſin go but this one? even this muſt go too, or thy life muſt go for it. O friend, ſet thy ſelf againſt every ſin, great and ſmall, open and ſecret, carnal and ſpiritual. Set thy ſelf againſt them heartily, be willing to proſper and overcome? and ſet upon them ſpeedily, let no iniquity live a day longer, nor ſleep a night more in quiet with thee, (only remembering to go forth againſt them in the ſtrength of the Lord) and then we ſhall quickly find thee to be one of Chriſts mortified ones, who, as thou art dead with Chriſt, ſhalt certainly live with Chriſt, and raign with Chriſt to all Eternity.

FINIS.